

Imprisoned Realm

"NO! Harry don't!" yelled Hermione.

The lunchtime chatter and laughter died away all at once at Gryffindor table. Harry caught a glimpse of their realisation that something bizarre and unwelcome was happening to him.

Harry knew something had gone wrong when he touched a floating textbook. Seamus had charmed the seemingly innocent book to glide along Gryffindor table. It had bumped Harry's temple and without thinking, Harry had tried to swat it away with the back of his hand.

Now this familiar yet strange travel was occurring. The textbook, was in fact, a Portkey. But it wasn't a normal Portkey as Harry soon found out. There was no normal hooking sensation around his belly button, nor was there that familiar feeling of being sucked through space. Even the colour he saw through his confused eyes wasn't normal: it was red, a darkish red that struck foreboding in his heart. Within the dark, blinding light pierced through, like claws had scratched away bits of the void. It burned painfully through his retinas.

Paralyzed by an unknown strength binding him like tentacles Harry was forced to hear Hermione's anguished screaming, and shouts coming from others. He tried to yell back, but nothing escaped his mouth, the force around him prevented him from doing so. Then out of nowhere a loud whooshing sound penetrated his ears, drowning out Hermione's terrified shouts and then ... he heard strange sounds, people's voices; snippets of conversations. Some seemed happy, others angry, there were snatches of laughter and moments of crying. It was like somebody was tuning a radio in Harry's head. And then... just when the noise had become excruciatingly loud... there was suddenly nothing. Peace evaded, but only just. It was like the longest Floo Harry had ever experienced.

Harry never felt himself hit hard ground. The strange light and colours had vanished and now his eyes were squeezed shut. His ears continued to ring loudly; this kept him from recognising the sounds of his new surroundings, and his heart palpitated so hard it hurt him.

He knew one thing was for sure; he wasn't at the Hogwarts anymore. And he only had two things on his mind: kill Seamus for getting him into this mess! He should've guessed it was a stupid trick. Oh perhaps, Seamus was not Seamus at all. That he wasn't sure about. All that happened in sixth year made Harry regard everyone with suspicion nowadays. Anyone could be working for Voldemort or Imperioused by a Death Eater. Harry just didn't know if it was just a simple charm gone wrong, or a sinister plan.

Hours before, when he had awoken that morning, and stared into the mist the Dementors had produced, now so thick a chill of despair would constantly invade their thoughts, Harry had never thought this incident he was now experiencing, would happen. Instead he had hoped to do a little more research on the Horcruxes with his best friends Ron and Hermione. Now, he wasn't sure whether or not to open his eyes and see, for himself, the extent of Seamus's damage.

Harry opened his eyes. He expected to see himself in some deserted park or forest, or perhaps a backyard or even a dungeon. Instead, what he saw stunned him beyond comprehension. After a moment of complete shock, Harry bolted upright and skidded backwards until he smacked against a wall. He was lost for words, surely he was dreaming?

A woman, aged in her mid thirties, with auburn grey-streaked hair was pointing a wand right into his face. And what shocked Harry most of all was those bright green eyes that framed her face, the face he knew from photos and the old memory or two. Lily Potter stared at Harry with angry and shocked eyes.

"M-mum?" Harry managed to say with his dry throat. He was utterly incredulous. Was he dead? A nightmare of course! he thought. But still, Harry had that hopeful twinge in his stomach. That wish, that his eyes were not betraying him. "Mum... L-Lily Potter?" He rubbed his eyes, just to make sure he wasn't seeing a different person.

Lily's wand shook slightly and she had gone pale at those simple words. Like she had not been called 'mum' by Harry for a very long time. Her mouth quivered as she fought to say the right words, her eyes darting from door to window then to Harry again in desperation,

her other outstretched hand fumbling on a cabinet behind her. Yet Lily's wand was still dangerously positioned at Harry's nose. Then this woman said something which shook Harry even more...

"H-Harry... how did you escape Azkaban?"

So! Tell me what you think... please review.

Chapter 1

“Harry, how did you escape Azkaban?”

Harry’s eyes widened. This all had to be some horrible dream. The entire scene was so surreal for him to even absorb. The woman, who looked like his mother asked him how he got out of a prison. Why was he in a prison? Did he just hear correctly?

“What?” he whispered, brows crinkled together. He could feel a hot flush of despair creep up his stomach and into his chest, strangling his heart. “Azkaban? I was never in Azkaban.”

Harry could see the woman thinking hard, her chest heaving in and out, in shock and he could tell she was dead scared. “Harry, you escaped last night... everyone’s been looking for you. How did you do it? And why, did you come back here?”

“Come back? Listen! I didn’t come here, I—I’m not even sure where here is! Or if this is real...”

Lily laughed haughtily. “Yes, son, this is very real, too real for even me. Did you come back to kill us all?”

“What—?”

“Don’t play coy with me, Harry... I know you well,” Lily spat.

Harry stared at her, he felt a sense of grief and betrayal... feeling foreign to him. They were the woman’s. Was it really his mother? He felt slightly faint. She was either his mother or an incredibly great acting Death Eater.

“Obviously you don’t,” he muttered.

Lily cautiously moved towards the blinds, pulling them down. The room was instantly bathed in an eerie dull light, making him feel claustrophobic.

“Tell me the truth.”

There was malice in her voice Harry didn't like. "I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT'S GOING ON!" Harry yelled in frustration. He was telling the truth. "And you! You're not real?" He shot up, thinking the worst. This all had to be some nasty trick. He was trying to convince himself that this wasn't real, because Lily Potter had died sixteen years before. He pulled out his wand.

Lily, acting with instinct, swished her wand. A jet of red light sizzled past Harry's ear, smashing a family portrait behind him. Harry covered his head and ducked as a shower of glass and red sparks danced off the wall and over his head.

"Look," he panted. He wasn't prepared to curse the woman yet, not until he got some answers, though he pointed it nonetheless, ready to defend himself if necessary. "I was at Hogwarts only minutes ago, having lunch with my friends. I touched a book my friend levitated... and, and then it acted like a Portkey. Only now, I'm not so sure it really was a Portkey. And now I'm here... I don't even know where this place is."

Lily looked at him closely, with a calculating expression Harry only knew too well from knowing Snape. But he didn't feel she was using Legilimency. He was good at Occlumency now, practicing over the summer, he had to be, if he wanted to fight Snape! Harry was also good at recognising the signs of someone trying to see into his mind, but he still wasn't good at Legilimency.

"You haven't been in Hogwarts for a year. And you couldn't have been anyway! Hogwarts has been closed ten months now. So you can cut the cock and bull now."

What the hell was going on, thought Harry. Moments before he was at Hogwarts thinking of a way to capture a Horcrux, that seemed to be hidden in a dark fathomless pit in Wales. Harry was sure the Horcrux was somewhere within it. Voldemort's enchantments were all over the place and pit— they were so powerful that the hair on the back of his neck stood on end. And it was there, legend had it, where Rowena Ravenclaw had died. Fell to her death. So it seemed feasible that Voldemort would pick this place for one of his Horcruxes.

“Mummy...”

Lily gasped, and so did Harry at the sound of a little girl's voice.

“Mummy what's going on? I heard shouting and something break.”

Harry could tell his mother was now extremely frantic, her wide eyes pealed on the figure he could not see in the hallway. But he looked away, and at the glass scattered on the living room floor, finding the portrait that had fallen. His heart nearly stopped when he picked it up. All five members were waving and smiling happily at him. His mum and dad were in it, along with three children. There were two boys, both auburn haired like their mum, and the tallest wore glasses. The little girl, who looked about nine in the picture, had black pigtails, but her glassy eyes were all white as though she could not see. She was not smiling. But most notably, was the fact that there was no Harry.

“He's here, isn't he?”

“Jessica, darling I want you to go up to your room, lock it, and contact your fath—no wait -- contact Remus and tell him your brother is back. You know what to do, now go!” There was urgency in Lily's voice.

Why would a Death Eater go to great lengths to include a child, when they had him trapped already? Harry's heart fluttered for a moment.

“Jessica,” he whispered, staring at her misty eyes in the photo. If all this was true, then Harry could've had a little sister. He was suddenly jolted out of his thoughts when he felt something hard on his temple. He let go of the picture.

“Give me your wand and get up!” Lily said, holding her wand at Harry's head.

“What are their names... your two boys?” Harry asked, obeying the woman for now.

“You know what they're names are. Now move!” He felt a jab on his temple and he complied. He wasn't ready to fight back.

Harry passed the kitchen and was led to a closed door. Lily opened it to reveal a vast darkness, and rickety steps that seemed to lead nowhere. "Get in there. And don't bother using wandless magic; the basement's got a number of protective enchantments, Dumbledore kindly put on."

Dumbledore...alive here! Harry thought as he was forced into the room. As soon as he was inside Lily shut it and he could hear a number of locking charms wielding the door closed. Harry could see nothing. He should've made his move, but he wasn't sure if it was really her. And just by the off chance he had accidentally made into some other dimension, as they had discussed in Charms and Defence Against the Dark Arts... then he had nowhere to go, especially since he was a fugitive in this strange new world.

And since when did he know wandless magic? He could do non-verbals just like any other wizard now, but it was rare for someone to do magic without a wand. What was this world's Harry like? And what did he do, that turned his own family and world against him? Was Voldemort alive? And since Harry hadn't died in this world, does it mean Neville was the Boy who lived, or worse, dead?

Harry had so many questions and the feeling of hopelessness was beginning to fill the pit in his stomach. Bowing his head in the darkness as he managed to find the corner of the room, using only his fingers, he wasn't so sure his questions would ever be answered.

Harry leaned his head on the cold wall, and closed his eyes. Maybe when he woke up, he could joke around with Ron about this stupid dream. But if all this was real, Harry didn't know how well he was going to cope with it all.

Please review guys. :D

Chapter 2

Broken Hopes

Remus Lupin had just finished patching a hole in his travelling cloak, when the flames roared in his fire grate, painting the room in emerald green. The war-torn man, with an unhealthy look of someone who was very ill turned towards the fire, catching his eye on a mirror beforehand. He hated mirrors and shadows. He hated the way the shadows emphasised his sunken eyes and the slight hallow of his cheeks. The wisps of grey on his head, made him wince at how prematurely old he must look. Even the dilapidated, scarred house he lived in made him feel older than he should have been.

“Remus?” called a little girl. Jessica always placed a smile on his face. A gentle smile was always rare these days.

“Jessica, how are you to-“ There was something wrong, Lupin could sense. Perhaps it was by the way her lips quivered, or her terrified, blind eyes. “What’s happened?”

“Harry’s back. Mummy caught him. She wants you to come over here right now!” She didn’t bat an eyelash; her foggy eyes reflected the dancing flames.

Lupin’s heart plummeted. He knew Harry would try something against his own family again. He just didn’t think it was this soon. Remus was still amazed Harry and a few other Death Eaters had escaped the Goblin charms and curses that shielded Azkaban, now, since the Dementors left.

“Has he hurt any of you?” Jessica shook her head. Lupin leapt off his seat, draped his worn cloak over his shoulders and stepped into the flames. “Godric’s Hollow!” he shouted.

Remus took a moment to adjust to the dark surroundings of Jessica’s bedroom. All the candles were out. But with a swipe of his wand this was remedied. He found Jessica fiddling with a lock of her hair, back against the wall, staring ahead, as though there was an interesting

artwork in front of her. Lupin knelt down and gripped the girl's shoulders.

There was a light film of sweat on her forehead, and she bit her bottom lip staring right into Lupin's chest. "He's in the basement. Mummy said to lock myself in here."

"All right...did he fight back?" Jessica shook her head. "Don't move from here," he said calmly.

"Remus..." the girl whispered. "I'm scared, Remus." Lupin could feel her nails scraping his back. He hugged her tightly.

"You're safe in here, he won't hurt you again, I promise."

He pulled the girl's arms off of him. Lupin was a little concerned and a little suspicious that Harry was caught so easily. Perhaps the tortures of Azkaban had really gotten to the boy. Or maybe he was planning something. One thing was for sure, Lupin didn't trust the young Death Eater, especially since the boy was in Voldemort's inner circle and powerful in the dark arts. He let go of the girl, and opened the door, leaving Jessica to continue watching the wall as he closed it again.

Lupin hurried down the staircase, and wasn't surprised to hear a small sob coming from the kitchen. He tore his eyes off the basement door, where behind it, imprisoned the teenage traitor, and headed towards the woman, crying with her head in her arms.

"Lily, I'm here now."

"Oh god! Remus he's come back! He's here; I can't believe he came back!" Lily wailed, catching Lupin in a strangulating hug.

"We all knew he would," he said, with heavy thoughts.

"I- I've tried to be strong, I truly have. But he's still my child. It just doesn't register that he's here to kill us all."

"You're not the only one, Lily, believe me, I think about it every day. But hey, we have to keep our shields up," Lupin said, pulling Lily

away to stare into her eyes. "Harry is not the little boy you once knew. He's a cold-blooded killer now. You just have to look Jessica in the eyes, and Charlie's grave to know that he doesn't discriminate his own flesh and blood."

Lily sighed and sat down again like a heavy sack of potatoes, as though the word had beaten the denial and heartbreak into a mental closet again. There was a silent moment and Lupin wanted to know what was going through that head of hers. She had been such a tough warrior before now; this has been the first time in a year Lily actually showed any sort of emotion towards Harry.

"I called you instead of James, because I know as soon as James sees him, he'll kill him. You know how hot-headed he can be. Besides it's the first time in years he's had some quality time with the boys, especially in this day and age."

"I know... but Dumbledore needs to know," Lupin piped up. "The Order—"

"Screw the Order for the moment!" Lily got up again. "This is our chance, our chance to talk some bloody sense into Harry... turn him over to the light—" Her eyes were bright with hope.

Lupin furrowed his brow. Lily was hysterical, he thought. "No... it won't work, Lily we've told you countless of times: He too far in."

She crinkled her face, a hand covering her eyes. She took a deep breath and looked at Remus again. "I don't know why I'm feeling like this. I just don't want to. But it's coming back up. I saw something in his eyes, Remus, I really did."

"Like what?"

"Good..." she chuckled coldly. "I'm imagining things aren't I?"

Lupin wanted to say yes, but strangely his mouth felt so heavy, that he couldn't move it.

The distraught mother pulled something out of her robe: a battered looking wand in desperate need of a good polish. "Harry had it. We should try to contact whoever it's stolen from."

"I'm going to have chat with the boy, and then we'll call the Order in."

He headed out of the kitchen, and heard a small whisper which sounded like the words 'thank you.'

Harry didn't know how long it had been since he was locked in the basement, but it felt like hours, even days. He sat on the cold floor, with his chin on his knees, hoping that this would soon be over. Feelings were swirling in his head like a whirlpool about to suck him in. Then it struck him! What if Draco Malfoy had concocted this elaborate plan to get rid of him from Hogwarts? After all, the Slytherin had failed to kill Dumbledore, and now this could've been a desperate attempt to trap Harry to save himself. But then it occurred to him that Malfoy might be dead already or in hiding or something. Maybe it was Snape. He took a deep breathe and tried to relax. It was no use picking for answers right now. He soon wondered what was happening back home. How Ron and Hermione were coping if they continued on searching for the third Horcrux to be destroyed.

Harry's ears pricked up when he heard the locks of the basement door unlocking. The door creaked open, echoing in the empty space. Squinting from the painful light he saw a figure at the door, the figure's wand was raised.

In an instant Harry tried to stand up, but he heard a strong voice. "Move and you'll wish you were never born." With a flick of the man's wand, Harry found himself restrained by invisible ropes.

"Professor Lupin?" Harry said.

"Since when have I been a professor? I've never taught anything in my life." A wand flared up and Harry saw the werewolf perfectly clear. "Have those Aurors addled that brain of yours?"

Harry didn't say a word. It was no use telling him he was the wrong Harry and from another dimension just yet.

“Your mother wanted me to have a talk with you before we call in the Order. She seems to think that maybe we can change you for the better. But you and I both know that’ll never happen.” He paused. “Now...” the werewolf knelt in front of Harry, his blazing wand between them. Harry shut his eyes, trying to shield them and the intimidation he felt. “Why are you here? You escaped... you could’ve gone straight to your master.”

“I didn’t come here. I’m not the Harry you know. I’m from another place. I swear I am!” Harry was beginning to think that this place was another dimension, paralleled to his own. Flitwick had told the seventh years of other dimensions existing. Though, the magic to open the barriers was extremely rare and difficult to find nowadays. The magic is nearly extinct, banned by the ministries around the world for centuries, just as Horcruxes were. Not only was it rare, but extremely advanced. Only a very unusually powerful wizard could open it. It was realising this, did Harry’s stomach fill with butterflies.

Lupin raised an eyebrow. “That’s quite original.”

Harry let out a frustrated sigh. “I was at Hogwarts when a friend of mine – he screws up charms he experiments on – made a Portkey out of a book, only thing is, well the whole thing back fired and I ended up here, where apparently I’m an escaped Death Eater.” God! Now I know how Sirius felt, Harry realised.

Lupin quietly registered his face. “Harry, now, that wouldn’t be magic assessable to a school wizard. Not even you. You’re barely of age.” Lupin scoffed.

“Hey, I’ve been seventeen for nearly two months now, and you don’t know what I’ve--”

“What you’ve done. Oh yes we know what you’ve done Harry.”

Not in my world, thought Harry as Lupin stared at him.

Harry didn’t like people staring. Especially as Remus’s gaze slowly moved up to his forehead. The wand carefully prodded his sweaty

fringe away, revealing the lightning bolt scar, which gave Harry so much unwanted heartache and fame where he came from.

“That’s new,” Lupin replied, as Harry tried to move his head away from the wand tip.

“It’s a curse scar. It happened when I was one. Voldemort tried to kill me and his curse backfired, because my mother protected me with love. My parents died that night. It had to do with some stupid prophecy.” Harry’s heart was beating so fast. He didn’t like talking about his past.

Lupin scoffed at him again.

It felt like a blow to his tragedy and the memory of his parents.

“I’M NOT LYING!” Harry spat, anger welling up.

“You’re borrowing from the Longbottom’s story, Harry. Curse scar? There hasn’t been one for centuries!” The werewolf stood up.

“Wait... the Longbottoms are dead? Even Neville?” Harry asked in surprise.

Lupin didn’t answer the question. But Harry knew the answer to it just from the professor’s actions.

“You have to believe me, sir, where I’m from—“

“I’m sorry, but it’s hard to believe you, not when you’ve done so much to destroy so many people’s lives.” Lupin shook his wand and the light disappeared again. “Before I leave, where did you steal that wand?”

“What wand?”

“The one your mother took off of you...” Lupin replied, exasperation in his voice.

“I didn’t steal it. It’s mine.”

Harry listened carefully, waiting for Lupin to say some thing. Instead he only saw the door closing.

Lupin felt a little shaken up by the experience, even though it was as calm as it could ever have been. The boy was thinner than he remembered him to be, undernourished. The boy had been in Azkaban, so it was to be expected that that prison would change people both physically and psychologically.

Even though the Dementors had abandoned it many years before, the Aurors there made sure the prisoners wished they only had horrific memories to deal with. The Ministry doesn't lift a finger to stop the crimes and corruption that plague Azkaban, and the people don't care as long as the light was winning, and the bad were being punished.

Harry also looked as though he had shrunk, even though he was sitting. Lupin knew for a fact that Harry was been nearly six feet tall before his capture. Now he looked less than a foot shorter.

"Did you talk to him?"

Lily broke Remus out of his thoughts.

"Yes..." he said, rubbing his tired eyes. He caught himself on a glass reflection of a painting and turned away.

"Talked to him about what?"

Lupin and Lily jumped at James sudden appearance. Jessica was gripping her father's robes, standing behind him. He looked as livid, as the day he promised on his dead son's grave that he would punish Harry for what he did to them all. Sirius rushed down the stairs as well, his hair combed back sleekly and a goatee proudly adorning his handsome face.

"Where is he?" Sirius said, looking around the hall, his eyes locking onto the basement door. "I want to stare my Godson in the face before I—"

James gripped Sirius's shoulder hard; the both of them seemed to communicate in silence.

Lily gaped, suddenly even more paler than she was beforehand. "Where are the boys?"

"I left them with the Weasleys. Now, why the hell didn't you tell me?" James said. There was a crease between his brows, his grey flecked hair tumbled over his eyes.

"I—I—I just couldn't!" Lily whimpered and she looked over to Jessica.

"I'm sorry mummy, but daddy called in to say hello, and it popped out of my mouth," the little girl replied, backing a little further behind her father.

Lupin knew if James got hold of Harry, there wouldn't be anything left of the boy to bury.

Please stay tuned for the next chapter and don't forget to review.

Chapter 3

Father's Wrath

Harry heard several muffled voices coming from upstairs. They weren't happy, but angry, betrayed ones.

He felt the invisible ropes restraining his hands come undone, and didn't have the time to reflect on his conversation with Remus Lupin, because what he was hearing was obviously about him. Instinctively, he thought the situation was going to get a lot worse. The voices suddenly got louder.

"Protect him?" Harry heard the angry man say. "Protect him from what?"

"You, James!" Lily screamed.

"Oh my God," Harry whispered, hearing his father for the first time since delving into Snape's memories. Harry couldn't help but notice how different he sounded, how much more weary. The rage in him was more than Harry could bear.

"He doesn't need protecting, if you ask me," said another, who sounded like Sirius. Harry felt bile creep into his throat. How he missed Sirius. Hearing him speak again felt so surreal to him.

"I wasn't asking you! Why do you have to be on his side all the time, Sirius?"

But Sirius didn't answer.

"Because I'm right!" James yelled.

Harry felt it was wise to stand now in the darkness. He tried to ignore the twinge of pure grief and hopelessness in his heart, just hearing his father so full of hatred and bitterness.

"He's going to pay and you can't stop me!" The darkness seemed to shiver around Harry. He didn't like those words one bit. He touched

the wall with cold fingers like a blind man desperate to escape a few thugs.

BANG!

The door flew open and bright light flooded in again. Harry scrambled towards a corner and looked up to see James Potter literally flying down the stairs, with Lily trying desperately to stop him in his tracks.

“NO, JAMES! DON'T!”

Harry didn't even have time to think, let alone speak when he felt fingers curling around his neck. His head smashed against the damp wall and he couldn't breathe. The pulse in his neck grew stronger and his eyes and head were feeling the unbearable pressure as the hands tightened. James was bent on killing him. Harry dug his nails into his father's wrists, struggling. Then his eyes widened at the almost insane look on his father's face.

“You're not my son! You died with Charlie,” James gritted. “You died with Charlie!”

Harry began kicking James. Though all it did was throw the man over him and onto the ground. With horror he saw Sirius behind stopping Lily from trying to curse her husband. Lily's wand shooting sparks into the air as Sirius struggled to rip it from her hand.

“I'm... not... your... Harry...” Harry tried to say understandably, feeling pins and needles and stabbing pains in his eyes. It was no use. All it did was fuel the man's capacity to make him suffer for what their real Harry had done.

“Don't Lie! Stop lying!” James spat, smacking Harry's head on the ground, his words drowning out Lily's screams behind him. “You came into the house and you killed him, you nearly killed your sister. You could've left them alone and gone for me instead. He was nearly fifteen years old!” James shouted. Hot tears fell onto Harry's face. It took a moment to register that those tears weren't his.

Harry couldn't see James any more and his voice became a strange echo. "You... you..." The strength around Harry's neck lifted a little. The black specks Harry saw across his vision disappeared. "Murderer..." James finally said.

Harry didn't feel James let go. He just fell into an uneasy sleep, full of strange flickering lights in a swirling darkness.

For a moment there was a strange silence, but then out of the blue Lily attacked. "YOU KILLED HIM!" she screamed, turning James around and hitting him right on his chin.

Remus's heart thumped in his chest as he cradled Jessica, as he watching from upstairs. The little girl sobbed quietly, but Remus made sure she couldn't hear much; his hands covering her ears.

"He's not dead!" Sirius said quietly, he sounded weak to Remus. Sirius looked up; catching his eye, but Lupin looked away quickly, feeling ashamed. He walked the girl over to the living room and sat her down in the armchair. "Don't move from here, until I say so, all right." Jessica sniffled and wiped her eyes with the sleeve of her jumper. He stood up

"Remus..."

He looked down. "Yes?"

"I didn't mean to tell Daddy."

"I know," Lupin replied soothingly. He then rushed away, nearly tripping down the basement stairs. He found Lily crying in a corner, James backed against the wall with his eyes close, sitting near Harry's still body, and Sirius, rubbing his temples.

Remus knelt down, observing the boy's features.

"He's not dead," said Sirius, the bitterness back in his voice.

"I heard the first time," Remus said. He was too tired to create a grudge.

Harry was breathing. They could see his chest rising up and down, a little shallowly perhaps, but still breathing. Deep bruising was starting to blossom around the boy's neck.

"Last thing we want, James, is for you to end up in Azkaban for murder. This family's lost so much already," Remus said scathingly. "They don't need to lose a father."

"I think the Ministry would understand about a parent's grief."

"Dumbledore wouldn't!" Lily yelled. Her hair was soaked in sweat. She sniffed, picking up Harry left arm and peeling his robes back. "No matter how much you despise that fact, James, Harry is still our son!"

"Everyone just shut up, all right?" Sirius piped, walking away. Eyebrows knotted together as he thought hard. "I'm going to call in the Order now." He wiped away a little bit of blood from his lip. He was about to say something about it to Lily, but the sharp look in her eye stopped him from retorting.

Remus looked over to see Harry's thin forearm. There was no Dark Mark. They weren't surprised though. Harry had devised dark ways to cover it up magically. Lily placed her wand over where the mark should be. Nothing happened. "Shit! There's a new spell going around, there must be!" Lily snapped, letting Harry's arm go.

A few Death Eaters hid their marks to make them appear innocent when interrogated, especially those underage, and from families with no history of dark blood. While others, who had the visible Dark Mark, claimed that they had been hoodwinked into joining.

With Voldemort in reign for 28 years, he didn't discriminate from allowing children from joining. Some kidnapped young children whose parents had irritated the Dark Lord or refused to join. They broke them and then trained them. Many didn't even survive to become Death Eaters.

Since Harry was one of the targets of the prophecy they were afraid of this happening to him, but strangely Harry had not been kidnapped. He just walked away from the light. The boy had told them so.

They believed Harry had joined when he was eleven, leading a double life, not even his parents even fathomed. The Order always thought Harry was trained in secret in the dark ways. How his actions could have escaped them all, boggled Dumbledore especially. For Dumbledore, Harry's betrayal hit him with devastating effects.

The year before, Harry was as quiet as ever, walked into Charlie's room and uttered those deadly words of the Avada Kedavra curse, killing his brother. He turned around and discovering that his sister had watched, cursed her as well. They never knew why he didn't finish the job. Harry was closest to his little sister and she loved him the most. Harry may have hesitated to finish her off. They heard Jessica scream just before she collapsed. Remus and James sped up the stairs to see what the commotion was about, but the boy stood paralysed and when they approached him, he vanished. He broke through the wards protecting Godric's Hollow and Disapparated. Only someone with immense power could break through Dumbledore's wards.

To this day, they still don't know why he had killed Charlie and maimed his little sister. They were sure however, that Harry was meant to kill the entire family that day.

"Come on, Lets go... he'll be fine..." Remus coaxed, putting his hands on Lily's cold shoulders.

James opened his eyes, he didn't even glance at his son, just stood up, mumbled something under his breath which sounded like, "He still deserves to die," and left. He looked so terribly exhausted and worn out, Remus thought. He watched James, a grieving father trudge up the stairs like a old man who had lost his walking cane... utterly defeated by the world around him.

"James—"

“Leave him,” Lily said calmly. ‘He needs to deal with this alone. We need to keep him away from Harry next time.” Remus agreed sullenly, helping Lily up. “Wait! Harry. We can’t just leave him here like this!”

Remus hesitated for a moment, then he waved his wand around and a blanket floated over Harry, with a pillow fitting snug under his head.

“Is that all?” Lily gaped, staring from Remus to her still son.

“We can’t do anything until we hear what Dumbledore thinks, all right, Lily? We need to protect ourselves. I think he’s weak enough not to resist the charms in here, Dumbledore knows Harry’s strength now. If he was upstairs... you’ll know what will happen.” It was too frightening to think about. Harry wasn’t a normal teenage wizard anymore.

Remus steered Lily around and helped her up the stairs, and helped her not to look back. He felt guilty leaving Harry like that, though he realised there wasn’t much they could do without the boy potentially lashing out.

When they arrived upstairs, Dumbledore was across the hallway, staring at them with his piercing blue eyes. His half moon glasses were glistening in the candlelight. “What’s happened?”

Sirius crossed his arms and spoke first. “Harry’s returned.”

“No... what have you done?” As he asked this, Kingsley Shacklebolt and Mr Weasley showed up looking rather disconcerted. “I’ve said before, if we come in contact with him, not to harm him.” They all shifted uneasily. There was a fierce chill radiating from his figure. Gone were the days in which only humour and understanding twinkled in those light blue eyes. Now after 28 years of darkness, the toll of war had taken over his kind spirit. Now he wanted answers fast. When Remus watched Dumbledore rest, he noticed how frail he seemed, but when he needed to fight, Dumbledore did fight and gloriously he did.

“Is he hurt?” Kingsley asked.

“He’s OK...” Remus quickly replied. “We had a little bit of a spat.”

However, Dumbledore could see straight through those words. “It was James wasn’t it? Where is he?”

Lily sighed “I don’t know. Frankly I don’t want to be near him at this stage. Arthur, are my children all right?”

Arthur took off his travelling cloak and placed it over his arm. “They’re fine, Lily. Molly’s looking after them. We tried to keep this information from them, but I think they’ve guessed. Your oldest tried to sneak out some Floo to come here. But I stopped him before he had the chance.”

“Well, we all know Michael takes after his father,” said Remus.

“Come... let’s talk in the kitchen.” The old Headmaster moved away, as though proclaiming to everyone he did not want to see Harry just as yet. Remus mentally sighed in relief. Hopefully when Dumbledore did see the boy, he’d be a wake.

“Now, how did he arrive here?” He sat down, flicked his wand and set the kettle to boil, and then long fingers rubbed his temples as though to relieve a headache.

Everyone sat down, Sirius right next to Remus. His cut lip all healed up. “We better go look for James after this meeting, Moony,” Sirius whispered.

Remus nodded. “Next time, we better keep him calm.” Sirius’ eyes flashed, much to the werewolf’s annoyance. Although Sirius had changed, as they all did since their school days, there were times when he was stubborn to the whims of his heart.

While they were talking, Lily had disappeared to retrieve something. She walked into the kitchen holding a dilapidated text book on Charms.

“This.” She handed it to Dumbledore. “He Portkeyed with this.”

Dumbledore quickly snatched the book, holding it close to his long nose. Eyes instantly narrowed, as though he was trying to discover microscopic evidence. "Where did he Portkey from?"

Lily gave a humourless laugh and went into detail how Harry told them that he had come from a different dimension. "He even had to cheek to ask me the names of his brothers. I heard rumours of what those power hungry Aurors do at Azkaban, but I thought... I wanted to believe they weren't true. Harry seems a little bit unsettled... in the head." There was a look of worry on her face.

Dumbledore looked away from Lily and stared at the textbook again. "Anything else?"

"Apparently he has a curse scar..." Remus wanted to say how different Harry looked, but he knew he was just being paranoid. The 'insane' theory was starting to look more and more plausible.

The old headmaster raised an eyebrow. "He does?"

"Shaped like a lightning bolt on his forehead. Says Voldemort gave him that when he was one. It was caused by the Avada Kedavra Curse rebounding off his head. He was protected from his mother's love, he says, personally I think an Auror did that."

Lily looked absolutely shocked and terrified. "And you didn't tell me!"

Remus opened his mouth, "I... thought it wasn't right to tell you at that moment. He said you and James were dead!"

Dumbledore was looking more and more perplexed than ever. "The curse scar is certainly interesting."

The door creaked open and James entered. His eyes were red. But he looked calm and composed. Everyone turned to him. "Where were you?" Lily seethed.

"Visiting Charlie. If you really cared about your dead son, Lily, you'd stop protecting him."

Lily gasped, but Dumbledore spoke up. "That's enough!" He said, sternly. James took heed and sat down. "I'll have a word with you later, James. This situation has gone out of control. I understand your anger, but you need to control it."

The headmaster tapped his fingers on the textbook. It was obvious it wasn't a Portkey anymore. "Now, where's the wand he used, if there was one used?"

Lily took it out of her robe sleeve. "It's Holly and Phoenix feather. I already checked."

Dumbledore's eyes flashed as he touched it. "His wandless power still needs controlling. He's still too young to master it to its full potential..."

They continued their discussion about Harry, unaware that there was someone outside the kitchen, silently opening the basement door.

Stay tuned for chapter 4.

Spear and Magic Helmet: Well I wasn't sure if it was a silly little fic. I have my doubts. L

KrazeyForever: Ya... tis a bit cliché, but then most ideas are :D

hamenpt: The kids would learn magic at home since Hogwarts is closed. Besides I'll explain it as I write on. This is a very different world.

sunne: You'll be right wondering how long it'll take for everyone to know it's a different Harry. Some people might realize quicker, but will it be enough to spare Harry a nice little cell in Azkaban... with the evil Harry still out there?

Mistress of Eternal Night: l loooooooooooooooooo vvvvvvvvvve cliffies.

Chapter 4

Escape

They continued their discussion about Harry, unaware that there was someone outside the kitchen, silently opening the basement door.

It was an uneasy sleep for Harry, made worse by distant sounds that drummed into his ears. They were persistent noises that went tap, tap, tap...

These sounds were nearly lost in the heavy darkness that pressed down upon Harry, but grew louder and seemed to be getting closer.

Tap... tap... tap...

Leave me alone, he thought.

Tap.

"No." His hand moved through the still air as though attached to strings. He wasn't counting on actually hitting something.

A muffled, "Ow!" reverberated quietly somewhere to his left.

Harry finally opened his eyes. He couldn't see anything. It was pitch black in the basement and all was silent again. Did he imagine it? He wanted to say who's there; instead he coughed and splattered, rolling onto his side. Dust stuck to his lips, but the cool floor felt heavenly against his bruised cheek. He inhaled deeply, his throat felt like it was a narrow tube filled with hot coals, and he couldn't get all the air he needed at once.

"Harry?"

He gasped at the sound. He coughed some more as dust entered his lungs and he ignored the soft voice. He jolted when something; a tiny hand perhaps, touched his shoulder, fumbling a bit in the process.

"Harry..." The voice was familiar, but new.

Harry relaxed a little, though still breathing in huge gasps, eyes now wide open and alert. He must have looked like a fish out of water.

“Harry, its m-me Jessica.” She sounded scared. Scared of him, maybe even frightened of being caught fraternizing with him. Harry wasn’t sure. What could James do? He nearly killed him, so anything was possible now. Everyone seen with Harry was an enemy; he knew his father would think that way after experiencing first hand what James’s vengeance can do.

Harry shifted on the ground, the cold now seeping into his robes, goose bumps erupting all over his body. He gingerly touched his throat. It was hot and sore, and pressing on it made him squint in pain. “Why...” he coughed, whispering. “Why did you come in here?” His voice was hoarse. He licked his parched lips, trying to pinpoint where the little girl’s face was. He didn’t like the dark, not when he wasn’t alone and vulnerable to attack. Everything was unpredictable when blinded, and Harry was in no mood for surprises.

“I w-wanted—“

“You shouldn’t be here,” Harry wheezed.

There was a pause, but he could hear the little girl trembling... feel her fear.

“I’m sorry for daddy hurting you. I didn’t mean to tell him.”

Harry pulled back a little when her cold hand touched his face, trying to decipher his features. She instantly pulled away. It felt strange for Harry to be touched by a stranger, even though she was only a child and his sister in this world. There was no emotional bond between them and he didn’t trust anyone or anything new to him.

“D-Dumbledore is upstairs, doing an Order meeting. I hate Order meetings.” Harry could almost sense her pouting in the darkness. “I hate our brothers. They’re always playing tricks on me now. I wish you never went to Azkaban. I wished you stayed here.”

For Harry, listening to this little girl pour out her heart to him like a cherished teddy bear made him feel terribly awkward.

“Why are you telling me this?” Harry croaked, still nursing his injured throat.

Jessica sniffled for a moment. Her hand was back, now pulling on his hair.

“Because I’ve missed you. You’re the only one in this family who likes me. Mummy and Daddy are too busy all the time with the war. It’s worse now since Charlie died. Michael and Chris used to prank Charlie all the time... remember that?”

Harry didn’t answer. Instead he momentarily wondered how life would’ve been like if his parents never died. Was this how it could have been for him? Was he just plain miserable and an escaped murderer?

“...They never bothered with you, because you always knew before they even tried. You’ve got good reflexes. That’s what Daddy used to say when he talked about Quidditch. Charlie was always in his books. It was easier to prank him. Now it’s me. I could curse them. But you said to me to be a good girl.”

Harry furrowed his brow as she continued.

“I’ve been very good, Harry, like you told me to. I haven’t forgotten your words. Remember? You screamed them at me before you cursed me.”

She was pulling his hair hard, almost tearing them from his scalp.

“Jessica...” This conversation was turning a little too scary for Harry. Obviously the girl was suffering from some sort of post traumatic stress. Harry ripped her fingers from his hair.

A bright light engulfed the room. Jessica held a lit wand to her side. Harry backed away. Was this her vengeance now? He had already suffered his father’s.

“How do you...” Harry could not understand why such a young child knew magic so much.

“Remus and Sirius have been teaching us magic, since Hogwarts is now closed. We all learn from home now. We have to. Timothy Bracken learns magic now too, and he’s two years younger than me. But I’m better than him,” she said smugly.

He could see her face now, like a ghost’s, white, and her eyes reflecting his face like a magical mirror. She reminded him of the Grey Lady who stalked the castle late at night. She was always sobbing, her eerie sounds sticking to the walls like moss. Her eyes were white, her hair grey, waving like seaweed. She must have been beautiful in life. But in death she looked a shadow of a woman, ugly from hundreds of years wallowing in sorrow.

“...Do you remember when we played in the woods at the end of Godric’s Hollow? All of us, and we had a picnic and Mummy and Daddy were happy, and you were happy. We played a Muggle game called football or something where you can’t touch a round spotted ball? We only stopped when Chris sprained his ankle. I got lost in the woods; I thought I’d never go home again, never see Mummy and Daddy again. But you found me. And you smiled. That was the last time you smiled,” she said. “You took me back. You never let go of my hand. You’re the only one who liked me.”

Harry watched the little girl blink slowly, tongue running over her large front teeth, that seemed a little too big for her small mouth. “Jessica, Mum and Dad love you too. They’re just got a lot on their mind now.” It felt desperately weird for Harry to tell her that. He loved his parents dearly, but at the same time, he still didn’t know them. Watching Snape’s memory in the Pensieve the year before changed something in him. He was telling her something he could never remember about his parents, but their legacy runs through his veins: their love. That was one of the things he was sure about.

“You... you think so?” she asked, hoping.

Harry nodded, though he quickly stopped because it was painful to do so. "They love you."

Those words had an effect on Jessica, more than Harry could've imagined. She seemed to relax, her ghostly complexion warming a little.

"I'm sorry Harry, for everything. I'll continue to be good when you're gone."

This was it, he thought suddenly. All the thoughts of the little girl vanished and in came the possibility of dying. A heavy feeling entered his stomach of dread. It'll end quickly, he thought. But the girl didn't do anything. And in any case what could she do? Instead she dropped the lit wand by his side and stood up carefully, hands feeling the wall so she could balance properly. "I saved your wand. Mummy kept it hidden from everyone."

The girl disappeared up the stairs. Leaving the door opened a touch, so that a streak of light showed the outline of it... like the light at the end of the tunnel, well sort of.

Harry then noticed that his heart was beating so hard, it was in danger of blasting out of his chest and bouncing onto the dusty floor. She left a wand for him. He could free himself and run. But where would he go? That would be something he'd have to put aside for now.

Harry's shaking hand reached out for the wand. It wasn't his wand, but it'll have to do for now. Though no matter, because as soon as Harry touched it, a strange buzz radiated from his fingertips, filling his chest and entire body. It was a bizarre feeling, like electricity rippling through flesh, though without the pain, but it made him feel pleasant. Harry was surprised and let out a small gasp. The wand connected with him and he was connected to it. It was nothing like he had experienced back in his own world.

The wand was made of Yew. And he instinctively knew it was Yew and Phoenix feather. Horror-struck, Harry suddenly dropped it,

realising where he'd seen a wand just like it before. Question was why was it his wand?

"It's settled then," Dumbledore said around the table. "I'll send a message to everyone in the Order and tell them what's happened." He ran his fingers along Harry's wand. He seemed very interested in it, and James did not understand why.

"I still don't think this is right!" James said out loud, playing with his glass of fire whiskey. The ice within it had already melted.

Dumbledore observed him kindly. "We need time, James; time to decipher where this boy's loyalties lie and time to examine this boy's agenda. It is highly plausible that he's been damaged whilst in Azkaban. If he is broken, we may shape him into a good son again. If he is what he says--"

"THAT MONSTER WILL NEVER BE MY SON AGAIN!" James yelled, scraping his chair back, pointing his finger towards a happy portrait of Charlie sitting on top of a cabinet. He was black-haired and wisdom twinkled in those bright green eyes. Charlie looked like James's own father and had his disposition too. He was quiet, and soft spoken, kind and intelligent and had the worst sense of humour of all in the family. James wanted his son back. He looked away from the smiling picture, afraid he might do something he'd regret.

Dumbledore didn't even blink. He sat calmly, unresponsive for a moment, waiting for James to let his emotion out.

Lily cried out, tugging James's robe sleeve. "Sit down!" she hissed.

Dumbledore's moustache quivered as James sat, obeying his wife's command. "If he is a different Harry," he continued unperturbed, "do you want to condemn an innocent boy--"

"If he is innocent in whatever other realm this boy's from," Arthur pointed out, patting his shiny forehead with a serviette. "But I still think-- I still believe the Aurors broke him. They're worse than the Dementors."

“And some deserve what they get,” Sirius said with a sigh.

“May be so, but once the Aurors act like Death Eaters, they’re no better themselves. Just because they’re on the light side, does not make them right in whatever action they choose fit,” Remus spoke. “Otherwise then... there’s no difference between light and dark.”

The table went quiet, perhaps a little too quiet for comfort. Sirius stared out the little kitchen window, face motionless, until he bowed his head in reflection. Dumbledore nodded, and Lily squeezed her eyes shut and even Arthur looked resigned, though not James. He didn’t care. He felt no sympathy to the misery Harry had suffered in Azkaban. Or did he? He shook his head and his doubt vanished.

“Remus is right...” Kingsley spoke, his face clouding over to protect the emotions he really felt inside. “I’ve seen some of my men. They have good intentions, they really do. They want to do good, protect people, give everyone equal treatment. However I also know that many of the men and women have lost wives, husbands, children, and other family in this war. They’ve all suffered, we’ve all suffered. It changes people.”

Dumbledore considered Kingsley's words and gave a curt nod before turning to Sirius. “Sirius?”

“Let’s question the boy first. Then we’ll hand him over, only when we know for sure,” Sirius said softly, running a hand through his hair.

“I’ll agree in whatever action you think is best,” Lily added, her eyes watery.

“Excellent!” Dumbledore said, tapping his long hand on the table. “For now, let him rest.” He got up, a sign that the meeting had ending. Everyone burst out into intense conversation. “James, a word, please.” James nearly jumped a foot into the air.

Dumbledore placed a sympathetic hand on his shoulder, steering the grimacing man away from the small group. “I’m worried about you.”

“So is half the Order. I’m fine, Albus, really I am. I’m just...”

"Need to keep your head straight, more like. It's a shock, I know, seeing Harry back here."

James nodded. There were things he wanted to say and so much anger to let loose, that he thought it was wise to keep his mouth closed. Dumbledore understood this clearly.

"Sir, may I ask why Harry's wand is of interest to you?"

"Hmm, you may," he said. Dumbledore played with his beard, though never responding to James's question.

"Albus?"

"Oh, dear me! Sorry James, I was lost in thought there for a moment."

"The wand?" James said, cocking up an eyebrow.

"I have my suspicions and only that at the moment."

James figured the old headmaster wouldn't answer, but he gave the question a go... "It's just stolen."

"Hmm yes. It could be. I just need to investigate this a little further before the wand becomes a closed case and we can return it to whomever it belonged to."

"Do you need—"

"No," Dumbledore said straight out, looking James in the eye. "You have too much on your plate all ready worrying about your family's welfare and carrying out raids. This I feel, I need to do myself."

James felt a kinship with the headmaster at that very moment. Harry's betrayal and his evil had affected the old man so much. James knew how he felt, wanting to do things alone.

"I think you and Lily need a long sleep tonight. The others will guard Harry tonight."

They walked slowly into the hallway, Dumbledore's hand still on his shoulder, conversing with comforting words, scared to let James go. Maybe scared wasn't the right word. Dumbledore was never scared, and if he were, he never showed it. No, he cared.

Dumbledore stopped talking; at least James had bolted out any sounds from penetrating his ears, because what his eyes foretold was more important at this point. They stopped moving, the both of them, standing near the basement door. It was wide open.

"What--" James managed to say before Dumbledore's wand whipped out of his robe sleeve.

"NO!" Lily screamed behind them.

As though his Brain started functioning again, James followed the old headmaster's step. His wand was out and at the ready but he felt totally numb. He felt this numb once before when he saw poor Charlie's body on the floor. The boy's green eyes wide open... hands still holding onto a book he had been happily reading moments before. He was numb when he saw Jessica screaming in a corner, shaking and in shock... blood streaming out of her eyes, her wand broken, and a deep hole was punched into the wall next to her. And he was numb when he saw Harry standing in the shadow. Wand pointing towards Jessica, panting... white... blood dripping out of his nostrils and mouth.

He remembered that day like now. He was always head first into action, but when he saw his own children like that, something died within him.

Kingsley brushed past James, bolting halfway down the stairs. The room was completely empty; absolutely no sign of Harry anywhere. James took this signal to rush into action, he ran down the corridor and out the back door, which wasn't locked. They always locked it. Nobody was allowed out the house without his or Lily's permission.

"HARRY POTTER!" he yelled into the foreboding dark sky. The crescent moon cast ominous shadows along the trees.

Of course, nobody answered. Harry wasn't stupid. Only whisperings from the trees answered his call as the wind blew their leaves.

He was about to run into the woods, but Sirius stopped him. James felt like his heart had ripped into two again. He ignored the presence of others behind him for awhile. Panting, feeling his hate well up again.

Sirius squatted along side him and cast a charm onto the ground, a white mist trailed along the grass and to the woods, which was a few hundred metres away. The white slithering mist then turned into a cool blue before disappearing behind trees.

The wizard sighed and looked up at James. "He's been gone a good hour. He'd be back with his master by now. I'll go after the trail. We might get lucky." James failed to respond, and Sirius didn't press on.

He felt mocked and swore under his breath. Harry had escaped again. The old feeling of parental failure overwhelmed him again. Why?

James turned around, and though Dumbledore was in shadow, he saw something in the old wizard's eyes that made him instantly furious. For a split second, Dumbledore looked happy, before resolve and determination took over.

"Send signals to the rest of the Order. We need a search party sent out," Dumbledore commanded, before returning into the house.
Please review.. I luvs ya 4 eva :P

Stay tuned for Chapter 6: Where will Harry go? Will he stay safe? Are Jessica's brothers really that bad? And what's Dumbledore up to?

--strangeanimefreak: Of course James is OOC. He's not the James we know of.

--riegert8: The Charms textbook isn't exactly a normal portkey. It's a powerful device that broke through the barriers between worlds, and it broke through the ward like slice cheese because it's extremely

powerful magic. Get what I mean. I think I'll have to explain it further in the chapters, lol.

Why would Lily care for a son she hates? Because human emotion, and emotion by a mother is more complicated than a simple answer.

You think Remus and Lily would've spotted something wrong, just because Harry was confused, adamant he's a different Harry and all? Well no, because in their eyes Harry's just escaped prison, and confused, disorientated, 'insane' prisoners are normal in this world.

--what are you even saying: Why thanks :D Once I get the idea across, I basically don't write anymore of the chapter, that's why they're short, lol. I'm not a long-chapter sort of person, Sorry guys.

--xScenex: Sorry for the long wait, dearest, teehee.

--KrazeyForever: No insult made, teehee. It IS cliché, I'm not hiding that fact, but heck, I like clichés when they're done right. Bad Harry had escaped. He escaped before 'our' Harry had turned up in their world.

--Jamie15: Ahaha! It gets confusing for me too! They've guessed, as you can see in this chapter, but... that's all I'm saying for now.

Anyways... on another note. I'm going to eventually change the title of this fic. it irks me. It was a title that I came up in the spare of the moment, and now it annoys me. Just have to find a interesting title now... hmmm.

Chapter 5

Fugitives

Harry ran. He ran like he had never had before. He jumped and smashed his way through thickets of bush, and small trees and cobwebs too. He didn't even turn back once to see if there was anyone following him.

His heart was pounding and his chest hurt with a stitch. But he didn't care; he had no choice but to get as far away as possible. He didn't know where he was going; anywhere was good. He jumped over a log and continued on, glimpses of the moonlight peaking through the tree canopies, giving him light and a sense of direction.

He jolted when his foot snagged on something. He felt his ankle give a sickening snap. Harry momentarily felt himself flying through air, then crashed into the ground with a thud.

Harry stifled a yelled, biting his lip and drawing blood as he clutched his ankle. "Shit!" he swore, rocking back and forth in excruciating pain. He looked at his ankle, it was already swelling to the size of a grapefruit, and he couldn't even move his toes.

"Episkey," he whispered, attempting the spell on his broken ankle. The swelling subsided, but of course he knew it wouldn't heal the fracture. Harry was angry, he was scared, and he just wanted to go home. He fell back softly, still clutching his ankle. Dry leaves stuck to his hair and the cool ground calmed him. His watery eyes stared at the covered sky with pain and frustration.

But he wasn't going to cry. No way. Harry took a deep breath. His ankle was in so much pain, there was no way he would get out of this one. Unless...

Harry turned his head, fingers fumbling along the damp soil, looking for a branch. He waved his new wand, and mutely transfigured the branch into a broomstick and applied the necessary rudimentary charm to make it fly.

He was good at non-verbals now. Fighting Snape had given him a new determination to combat his failure at Occlumency and his under confidence at mastering non-verbal spells. He did this in hope that when he meets Snape once more, the wizard wouldn't even know what hit him. Harry wanted to curse that smirk off Snape's face before he was done with him.

Harry squeezed his eyes shut, his face scrunched up at the prospect of not ever being able to fight Snape, avenging Dumbadore's death and for aiding in killing of Sirius and his parents. Taking in a deep breath, he drove all thoughts not related to the present situation out of his mind. He grasped the nearly formed broomstick, and peeled his ears for any strange noises. Except for some owls hooting in the distance and the rustling of leaves, he heard no sign of the Order drawing closer.

"Right..." he said to himself, struggling to get up, holding the broomstick for leverage.

Harry stumbled, and gingerly tested his foot which throbbed with piercing pain now, because blood was rushing towards it. He winced and instantly felt like fainting. Then the flapping of wings nearby made Harry double the effort to stay awake and alert.

He looked around, trying to keep silent as he mounted his broomstick. He lifted off wobbly with one foot. It was a bumpy ride, lifting into the air. It felt like it was Harry's first time on the broom, and he clutched it tightly, observing the view as the trees grew shorter and Harry got higher, the wind whipping his hair, and a light rain sprinkled his cheeks. It would've been better if he wasn't trapped in some other world being chased by both sides.

He could see the horizon now. Up in the hills, past the woods, he could see tiny flecks of light. They were searching for him. Harry took this cue to fly away, as far as possible. He didn't care where he went as long as it was safe and he had a while to think of something to get back to his own world.

A fireplace roared bright orange and a clock with the names of several Weasleys stood centrepiece on top of the mantle. All, of course, pointed towards mortal peril.

Two auburn-haired boys sat on the couch staring at the fire. Their faces seemed to glow in the light. The tallest, who wore oval rimmed glasses, blinked, trying to keep his eyes opened. His arm was leisurely pulled over the side of the couch. He took a moment to gaze at his little brother. He didn't wear glasses, though he was considerably shorter than any other normal thirteen year old wizard. Then again, short stature was normal in their family until they hit late teens, and then it was like something switched on their growth gene to full steam ahead. Of course, it didn't stop Michael from teasing his baby brother every now and then: Midget and mini fur ball amongst his vocabulary that would annoy his brother deeply.

"You all right there, Chris?"

The younger boy sighed, and crinkled his freckly nose, while his green eyes reflected the fire. "Yeah I'm fine. It's just..."

"What?" asked Michael, genially concerned. He lost too many of his family and friends, so he felt extra protective of everyone now.

"I hate not knowing... you know," the boy whispered, scratching his long unkempt head. Michael nodded, understanding completely how Christopher felt. They weren't the sort to sit back and let the news come their way. But now, was one of those times when they had to wait, and no matter how they kept pleading or sneakily trying to discover some bit of information, no one would give it to them.

Everything was getting back to normal until this happened. Their father had taken them out for a little camping expedition in Ireland. It was wet and muddy. That's all Michael could really remember about the Irish landscape, they never once left their comfy three bedroom tent with on suite bathroom they had. But they had so much fun. Michael wouldn't be surprised if he developed a six pack from all the laughing he had experienced.

"I can't believe he's back!" Michael said out loud, his hands scrunching into fists. If he ever saw Harry ever again, he'd kill him. He wasn't as powerful as Harry, but Ginny taught him a wicked Bat Bogey hex, that'll drive Harry off a window ledge.

The door that led to the Weasley kitchen opened, and out come Ginny, the youngest Weasley and only girl in the family. She was good looking sort too, Michael thought. He liked it when her red hair flowed behind her. Though, he wouldn't dare try anything, not when Ron Weasley would be ready to pounce on any male attempting to whisk his sister away. Ron who was taller than Michael could possibly ever imagine being, followed behind. The tall Weasley nearly reached the top of the doorway. Mrs Weasley walked behind them, charming a large tray filled with cups of tea and scones. She was a plump kind-hearted woman, very motherly to anyone. Michael liked Mrs Weasley for her cooking. His own mum tended to overcook sometimes, so that the kitchen always smelt like something was burning, even though there might be nothing on the stove.

"All right, dears?" she said, soothingly, sitting between the boys. Ginny and Ron sat down in the armchairs, looking a bit tired. The day's events had affected them as well.

Harry's betrayal hit Ron the hardest within the Weasleys. They had been friends, and Ron couldn't believe that his best friend had been keeping such a devastating secret of being in league with the Dark Lord. 'I just can't believe it,' said Ron once. 'How could he be a Death Eater? He didn't even try to kill me off, and my family are all blood traitors.' Michael had just shrugged. He didn't know what to say at the time.

He took the cup of tea Mrs Weasley offered him and said thank you softly.

"How long do you think the Order will keep Harry, before they give him up to the Aurors?" Ginny asked, nibbling on a scone.

Mrs Weasley straightened up; she looked a little reluctant to say anything at first. "I don't know much. It's best to ask your father when he arrives.

"Boys you'll be sleeping here tonight, just to be on the safe side. You can use Fred and George's beds, since they're off in Australia trying to secure a business deal of some sorts." Mrs Weasley sighed and

there was a look of frustration on her face. "Why couldn't they just taken the jobs Peter MacBeth offered them at the Ministry? They would have had nice comfortable desk..."

Michael smirked and hid behind the cup of tea. The twins were probably trying to sell off some dodgy looking broomsticks for all they knew. Fred and George weren't, occasionally, the most trustworthy salesmen in the world,. They had good deals, but sometimes you could see straight through them like brittle glass.

After the rest of their supper, Michael and Christopher bade good night to the Weasleys and headed off to bed. They couldn't have a chat with Ron and Ginny alone, because Mrs Weasley made sure they weren't going to talk about Harry anymore, for the night.

"I wish they'd tell us something," Chris said, as he pulled off his shoes, jumping into bed. "Just because we're kids doesn't mean we should be kept in the dark. I mean, is it so hard for them to Floo in with a message?"

"Yeah! We're unfortunately related to Harry... So it should give us some right to know what's going on." A dark thought crept into Michael's mind. "I hope he hasn't hurt anyone. Shit, if I ever see him again, I'm prepared! Harry would wish he finished us all that day. Bastard!" Michael whipped out his wand, "Accio pyjamas."

Michael was fifteen, two more years and he'd officially be allowed to do magic outside his home. But he knew a lot of hexes and curses. And if he met Harry, at least Michael would die trying.

He got into bed and fell asleep instantly, though his dreams were very troubled indeed, filled with green lights and an evil cackle and Harry standing besides You Know Who, aiming his wand at Michael's chest, his mouth sculpting into the words of the deadly killing curse. Micheal didn't have a chance to scream--

"Michael, Christopher, wake up."

Michael opened his eyes groggily, a stream of bright light fell through the curtains, and an annoying sparrow was twittering outside. How could it be morning already when it felt as though he had only gone to sleep a minute ago? He saw his father's face swimming above him. "Dad?"

"Who else would I be?"

Michael placed his glasses on and propped up in bed, Chris was already pulling himself out of bed. "What happened? Where's Harry? Did anyone get hurt? And Mum and Jess?"

"Slow down, I don't have two heads," said James, sitting down on the edge of the bed. His hair seemed to droop today. "He's..."

"Yeah go on... they caught him right?" piped up Chris, sitting next to his dad.

James hesitated, ruffling his youngest son's hair. "Harry escaped last night from the house."

"HE WHAT?" The two boys yelled.

"Did any—"

"No, no one got hurt," James quickly added, "He disappeared silently."

Michael was relieved to hear those words at least. "Do you know why he was there? Was he there to kill us?"

"Hmmm, I think Azkaban made him a bit unstable to tell you the truth. Anyway, we'll find him, boys. And he'll be put in Azkaban where he belongs." James's face remained passive, hiding hatred and betrayal. "Come on, we're going home now, everything's secured."

"Bu how—" Chris started.

"I'll explain everything we know when we get home." He got up and left the boys to get dressed quickly.

Michael was mad. How the hell could his brother escape again? Dumbledore himself, made sure the entire place had the most advanced charms and enchantments protecting it. Oh how Michael wanted to find his big brother and make him pay. They weren't going to suffer because of him. Not any more.

When Harry woke up, there were a few things which bothered him. For one, there was a moment where he wondered why he was sleeping inside a small damp cave. Shouldn't he be asleep in Hogwarts? After all, it had reopened on September the tenth, after a lot of bickering amongst the Governors and some of the teachers at Hogwarts. So he didn't have to sleep in caves or even dodgy sort of hotel rooms in his quest to locate Horcruxes with Ron and Hermione. Second of all, his ankle was stiff and swollen and was very painful. Moreover, he couldn't remember what had happened the night before.

He sat up, leaning against the rocky wall, a furrow forming between his brows, as he tried with all his might to remember. Then of course, as he listened vaguely to water drops falling nearby, he did.

Harry groaned and ran his hands through his hair. While his stomach chorused with a series of rumbles, he rummaged through his pockets, finding a sticky sweet. He wouldn't otherwise have eaten something that had been stuck in his pocket for a while, but times were tough now. He sucked on the lolly, and tested his ankle, prodding it with his wand so the swelling would subside again. He didn't know how long he could go on with his broken ankle. Episkey wasn't a spell to mend bones, just broken noses.

Harry pulled his wand away and decided to have a closer inspection of it. The wood was smooth and well polished. He ran the facts inside his head: Yew and Phoenix feather. It looked the same size as his old wand, eleven inches. His heart skipped a beat. Voldemort's wand is thirteen and a half inches long.

A dark burden seemed to have lifted in his heart. Though, at the same time, it still troubled him that he had this wand combination. He felt lost without his old wand, but he was a little bit curious with this new one too, which did not rightfully belong to him anyway. He vaguely pondered on the different history of this world.

A rock fell somewhere in the cave, and Harry straightened up, wand pointing towards the dark crevice. "Who's there?" He had a feeling that he wasn't alone anymore. No one answered. Harry didn't turn away. It was a minute before he relaxed his wand arm, but still suspicious. He was deadly alert now.

To his side, he had located the transfigured broomstick. It was looking more like a dry branch now; the magic wearing off a little. However, this would be remedied. He would wait til dark to travel again and find a new place to hide, perhaps even get his ankle fixed, somehow.

Harry suddenly heard a noise that sounded like fabric rustling. He raised his wand, and it ignited.

"Show yourself!" shouted Harry. Pulling himself up, without hurting his ankle, he could see the outside of a figure camouflaged to look like the rocky wall. "Go on...show yourself."

The figure stepped forward and the spell disappeared, like they had poured a bucket of water over their head to wash the charm away. The smirking pallid and thin face of the other Harry Potter stood in front of him. He was tall and emaciated, wearing rugged robes, and his hair was long and dirty. He did not wear glasses, but his green eyes shone brightly, masked by dark circles.

Harry gaped, gripping the wall in shock and disbelief, all thought of his broken ankle in the back of his head now.

"Well... this certainly is interesting..." the taller version said, an eyebrow disappearing beneath his fringe and cocking his head a little.

Harry was stunned beyond movement.
Stay tuned for chapter 6

Please review darlings.

fireyhell: No DD isn't evil.

Kame-chan: Harry is 17, Charlie would have been 16, Michael is 15, while Christopher is 13, and Jessica is 9.

Bets: No, Harry isn't stupid, but he's done some dumb things even throughout the books. I don't think Harry wants to even chance seeing Dumbledore when his father is so mad. He doesn't know how the other people will react or what they are like in this universe. And I don't think he'd chance it out, rather escape.

Chapter 6

Doppelganger

“Well... this certainly is interesting...” the taller version said, an eyebrow disappearing beneath his fringe and cocking his head a little.

Harry was stunned beyond movement.

Gaining some sense, Harry stumbled back, feeling the grit of the sandstone graze his hands. “Who the hell are you!” he said before he could stop himself. But he already knew the answer, even though he really wished it weren’t true. He was facing himself and he didn’t like it, or him, one bit.

“I was just about to say the exact same thing.” The doppelganger moved forward a step and as he did so, Harry raised his wand further up. The boy stopped, alert eyes staring cautiously at the wand. Then his mouth curved into a malicious smile. “My wand. Why do you have my wand?” His voice was smooth and sweet, like he was asking a child for a sweet, only to end up snatching them when refused one.

Harry didn’t look at it. It was his only line of defence and he wasn’t about to give it up to a convicted murderer without a fight.

The tall Harry swept his long matted hair from his eyes, surveying the wand with hungry eyes. This Harry had grown a very sparse fuzzy and short beard, and his lips were parched and covered with sores. His knuckles were skinned, while old blood was caked beneath his fingernails. As his thin frayed robes fell off his emaciated wrists, Harry could see they were raw and cut, like he had been chained for a very long time. Harry wondered if this Harry had ever saw sunshine, he looked more like a vampire than anything with his pale translucent skin. “So... who are you?”

Harry did not answer, and the doppelganger smirked, nodding his head a little, expecting the discord. “You’re either a very badly Polyjuiced Auror or a very stupid Order member. So which one are you?”

Harry remained passive, and if he was correct, his taller self was trying to see inside his head for answers, so he doubled his efforts with Occlumency. He was so glad he took up Occlumency lessons over the summer, training on his own and with a new Order member, Orazio Catcher, who didn't treat Harry like an idiot when he failed. It was amazing what he could do when Snape wasn't part of it.

"Ah, well, not as stupid as I thought..." the other said, looking away from Harry's eyes, like he had given up his plight with Legilimency. He sat down on a rock, a slight look of pain resting on his face as he stretched his back and arms.

Harry took this gesture as a sign of appease, however, he still had his wand taught against the Azkaban stricken Harry.

"Very interesting..." taller Harry said to himself. Then he looked up. "You still haven't answered my questions."

"Neither have you." Harry didn't move from his spot. He stayed as far as possible from his other self. He couldn't move anyway, not without hurting his ankle.

"Well, I'm Harry Potter," the boy replied with a sigh. "Almost every wizard, witch, being and creature has heard of me."

No differences there, Harry thought to himself. "All for the wrong reasons, I presume."

The doppelganger snorted at the comment, eyes still trained on him. "And you... you look... younger, shorter, wearing glasses I haven't worn for awhile." He furrowed. "They've used hairs from last year..."

"What... no," Harry said, a little put off by the description of himself. "No, I'm not a Polyjuice. I'm not anyone in disguise. I'm me... I'm from..." Harry stopped.

The other raised an eyebrow. "If you are neither an Auror nor an Order member...and you look like me... then who are you?" He took a moment to ponder, an expression of interest and disbelief washing

over his face. "You're me from another... another dimension, aren't you? Very rare..." There was excitement in his worn features.

Harry didn't answer; he felt a foreboding feeling about this. This Harry was so decrepit looking, indecent, with an air of carelessness and fearlessness and dark power. However, it cautiously intrigued him.

"Oh come on..." The doppelganger smiled, revealing a missing tooth. "Were you sent here by accident or by someone? Bet you it was that stupid old fool!"

Harry winced at his other self. Every time he thought of Dumbledore Harry had a pang of grief and anger.

"Hmmm, perhaps not," he thought out loud. "No. We cannot pluck a person from another dimension into our own. You are usually pushed out," the taller boy said, tapping a finger on his chin. "And accidents, possible, but highly unlikely. It's very difficult to create a barrier between worlds, even by accident."

Harry's stomach made an unpleasant jolt. It was a trap then. The question now... could he get back?

"So otherworld-Harry, what's your opinion, then?"

Harry remained quiet, still contemplating the fact that someone had purposely sent him here. Harry thought about Seamus. The boy had acted normal throughout the day, and Harry had assumed the book had travelled from Seamus's direction, but Harry did not know for sure if the book had just levitated past by Seamus and not by him at all.

"If you don't answer... I can make you." Taller Harry stood up to full height, an air of impatience in his voice now. "I can hurt you."

Harry raised his wand a little more. This Harry reminded him of Tom Riddle and it made him very uneasy. "Just like you hurt Jessica and Charlie? Harry hissed. It felt bizarre talking about strangers, but the effect of those words was amazing.

The other Harry's eyes widened. "DON'T YOU EVER TALK ABOUT THEM!"

"Why, does it bring back bad memories? " Harry went on bravely. Harry made up his mind on this spot; this boy was as evil as they talked about. He felt ashamed and disgusted that this could be him in another universe.

"I... don't like you," the doppelganger spat, eyes still on the wand. "I want my wand back."

"Why should I give it to you?" Harry held his panic back. "I thought you could do wandless, or has Azkaban—"

"ENOUGH! DON'T TALK ABOUT THAT PLACE!" The boy was breathing heavily now, hands curled into fists as he looked back and forth from Harry and the wand. "You leave that place out of this conversation..."

"Oh, bad memories too? Well guess what, I won't give you your wand back," Harry said softly.

The other smiled, his Adam's apple bobbling up and down under silent laughter. "You're a weakling... you're nothing like me, Harry. I've followed you here last night. You looked deadly curious, but you're not so interesting anymore, you're just a nobody here."

He waved his hand suddenly, and before Harry could even flick his wand, a Protego shield ignited, enclosing him in a golden sphere.

"What?" the doppelganger said in surprise.

Stupefy, Harry thought savagely, a little stunned with the Protego shield which he had mastered without his wand. It had just happened with a mere thought, with instinct. The other Harry dodged the spell, Disapparating on the spot, and appearing right behind him.

Before Harry could return fire he was knocked cleanly off his feet, hitting the other end of the cave, where the dark was thick and the air humid. He lay dizzy on the ground, his ankle in excruciating pain now.

His face was screwed up in agony and only managed to open his eyes when he heard someone or something creeping to his side. He could see a pair of bloodied and dirty feet, the robes fluttering around his raw ankles. The boy knelt down slowly, and Harry turned his attention to the untamed face of himself. "Where are you from? Why did you come?"

Harry ignored these questions, his mind still on his ankle.

"Perhaps... if you tell me, I can help you get back home."

Harry gave a great shout of laughter... "As if you would help me. I don't trust anyone and most of all you..."

The doppelganger looked slightly intimidated and angered by Harry's words, but before Harry could understand this expression the boy looked away, defiant to keep his secrets hidden.

"Fine," he clicked his dirty fingers, "wand, please. I'll get it off of you even if I have to kill you for it."

"You don't need it," Harry said in a strained voice.

"You don't need it either..."

It took a moment to realise what those words meant; Harry thought about this for a second, as his fingers tightened their grip on the wand, while the other Harry still preyed for it. He did know or yet even knew he could master magic without wands, so why all of a sudden could he?

"You see otherworld-Harry. When you enter a different dimension, you begin to change the longer you stay, for better or perhaps, for worse. You develop new skills you never knew you had and maybe even lose some. I'm you and you are me when we are in the same place.

"Muggles seem to think we die if we meet the other self. It's not true; in fact we begin to feed off each other when we are so close like this. We can become stronger... our hidden potential, once seedlings,

sparks to life and starts to grow and thrive,” he said, his dead eyes now with an inkling of life. “It’s really fascinating... though there is only one example of this ever happening in the past, and my information only stems from that source. So of course, myth soon weaves its way into fact. Of course the effect would work in theory if you time turn and your older wiser self could help your younger self, but of course, bad stuff happens all the time to prevent that, just like I was considering killing you.”

“I’m not a murderer,” Harry said hearing that word, kill.

The doppelganger smirked. “You are now.” After a moment of consideration he stood up. “You can keep my wand Harry, keep it safe. I don’t like people touching my things. You can be the only exception.”

His was capricious; this boy was more enigmatic and unpredictable than Harry could’ve possibly dreamt of being.

“Oh and...” he turned around, his green eyes dark now. Harry could feel the power seeping off the boy. “Keep away from me, otherworld-Harry. If I ever see you again, I won’t be as kind.”

With a small crack the boy disappeared leaving Harry on his back with a buzz of disbelief at what had happened. His mind was still reeling over this. He was lucky to even be alive. This evil Harry was dark, a confirmed Death Eater, yes, but wise, independent and even slightly mad. He was James and Sirius and Voldemort mixed into a single entity. And top that all off, Harry was amazed and a little frightened that he could do wandless magic.

Harry suddenly became aware that his ankle wasn’t painful anymore. He propped up onto his elbows and gingerly tested it. It was healed. The other boy healed him. What a strange gesture, Harry thought. The boy was strange... full stop.

Harry fell back gently and stared at the dark cave ceiling where Stalagmites and Stalactites were at the point of touching each other. There was a time in the past where he wondered what the differences between the two were, but that was when he was still innocent and

ignorant of the world around him. Now he felt like he'd never be just normal Harry ever again.

Remus pulled out his old quill, the hawk-feather brushing against his stabled face. He leaned back against his chair and quietly observed Lily and James's little girl read brail. It looked like she was concentrating on her work, but she wasn't. Remus could tell when she was concentrating on her work or not, by the little crease that appeared on her brow.

"Jessica."

She blinked several times before staring at the spot Remus sat.
"Yes."

"You're not doing your work."

The girl opened her mouth in protest though thought better, bowed her head and said something which Remus couldn't hear.

"Best put your mind to rest."

"I know," she said, her voice soft, like a little squeaking mouse.
"Remus, do you think Harry will die?"

Remus sighed; he wasn't expecting a child to come out with such a question like that. "I... don't know."

The girl nodded. "I miss him." She was so forlorn and her limp black hair trailed over the book she had been reading like seaweeds washed onto rocks.

"We all do, Jess. But people change."

She looked up, "I don't think he changed at all. I -- I think other people have."

What a strange observation, thought Remus.

"What makes you say that?"

She shrugged her little shoulders. "I don't know..."

Lily watched her two boys sitting on an old wooden bench in the yard; they were discussing yesterday's events on their own. She, James, Remus and Sirius had sat down with them and explained what had happened.

She could see how differently they both reacted to their brother showing up. They were growing up to fast, she thought. Michael had looked furious, his eyes so intense with hatred, Lily feared the boy would do something as rash as James would've done in his younger years. Christopher had been angry, yet saddened, shaking his head at the end of the conversation, and Jessica, Lily worried for her most of all. Poor child, she thought. She lived in her own little world these days. Jessica never played with her dolls anymore, she's sit by the window playing with her hair. Once in a while the girl would talk to herself as though she was playing with an imaginary friend. Lily had imaginary friends at a young age, but she'd throw tea parties in their honor. Jessica didn't. The girl would stare ahead asking her friend if she liked kittens, and that's all they ever talked about: cats, particularly Harry's own, which had died the year before he killed Charlie and maimed Jessica.

Michael had just thrown a pebble across the yard, hitting a wayward gnome in the face. The gnome kneeled over and disappeared into the long grass. Christopher's laugh made Lily's heart warm.

The yard was so overgrown and weedy, and just the way Lily liked it. She had seen her sister Petunia's lawn and house once before and felt like she didn't belong there. Well, the fact that the Dursleys had looked at her and James with disdain and revulsion added Lily's dislike for anything perfectly manicured and groomed. No, she liked the yard just the way it was, lovely and natural. Plus, it had been a joy watching the children play hide and seek for hours on end. The nooks and crannies of the yard were perfect spots to hide when the children were much younger, and Harry would always be best at hiding. It would be dark before Lily would shout for Harry, tell him he'd miss dinner and desert and that his brothers were missing him. Skinny little Harry, with glasses too big for his face would come running out of an obscure spot and hug Lily around her middle, smiling.

“Did you miss me too, Mummy?” He’d ask her every time, his green eyes bright and shining with love. She’d kiss him on his forehead. “Of course I did, you’re my special little man.”

Lily sighed, letting the curtains fall. She had wondered from time to time what life would’ve been like if Charlie was still alive and Harry had not betrayed them in such a despicable way. She wondered how normal a child Jessica would be if she were not blind.

Why did her oldest change so drastically? She just couldn’t understand why he had turned so bad. What made a once loving and wise child turn? She would’ve died protecting her baby boy if Voldemort had gone for them instead of the Longbottoms. She would’ve died to give Harry the chance of living a good and humble life. Never in a million years did Lily dream of this happening to their family. Now she felt dirty for actually thinking, that perhaps, it would’ve been for the best if Voldemort had gone for Harry... even if it had killed them all.

Voldemort would kill Harry eventually. That fate awaited him, Lily knew with dread. The Dark Lord hadn’t forgotten the fact her boy was a part of the prophecy, just because little Neville had died. Voldemort lured Harry to the dark side so he could watch over him closely. Keep your friends close, and your enemies closer, they say.

“Lily,” James spoke behind her. “Remus is tutoring Jessica with Defence spells. He’ll call for the boys later on. He says the boys are slacking in their homework, spending more time pranking the neighbours than transfiguring spoons into mice.”

“Great, they’re like you and Sirius.” Lily rolled her eyes.

James clucked his tongue, “Ow, you say it like you’re sooooo disappointed,” he mocked. “I’ve put dinner on the stove.” Lily felt warm hands rub the nape of her neck, before curling around her shoulders. “Everything all right?”

She snorted “Wish it was.” She leaned against him. “I’m just trying to make sense of this all.”

James didn't say anything, though Lily felt his grip tighten, he kissed her. "So am I."

"Are you all right now?"

James sighed, his grip slacking. "Hmmm... I want to know what Dumbledore is up to. Harry escaped our clutches. The boy's more trouble than we thought he was."

Lily closed her eyes. "You should ask him."

"Ha! Like I haven't tried. You should've seen him when we found out Harry escaped the basement. He looked happy."

"Happy?" Lily repeated, a little confused by those words. Why would have Dumbledore been thrilled that Harry had done a runner? After all Dumbledore had felt immense betrayal at what the boy had done to their family.

"I'm telling you... something fishy is going on. And I'm not talking about the trout grilling in the oven."

"Maybe you misinterpreted the expression," Lily said. The old man was probably planning on something to recapture their son. Lily narrowed her eyes, thinking about James nearly strangling Harry. She had never seen her husband react so viciously to their own children, let alone to complete strangers. James had never reacted so badly to Snape in their school days either. "I don't ever want to see you act like you did towards Harry, James. You almost killed him."

The suspicious expression on James's face instantly turned into one of rebuttal. "Christ's sake, Lily, do you hear yourself? Harry isn't my son anymore! I've disowned him. He killed Charlie; he was going to kill us all for some stupid group. I'll do anything to bring him to justice."

"What if he was forced—"

"Forced to kill?" James laughed. "No Lily, he did it willingly. We never told you this, but when he came to at the Ministry -- after we cursed

him, and believe me Lily, it took two Stupefication spells to bring that boy down, he looked right into my eyes and said... he said." Venom was in his voice now. "He said, 'I'll do Michael and Chris next and you and mum can watch.' Then Harry just laughed." There was sweat on James's face, and he had gone extremely pale. "He wasn't forced to do anything."

Lily covered her mouth, she felt instantly sick. "I didn't... why didn't you tell me?" She sat on the window ledge. "You're supposed to tell me everything James."

"I didn't want you to worry too much about the kids and me. It was only hours after Harry killed our--"

"It doesn't matter James, I can handle anything that happens."

"Yes... I'm sorry... it's just you weren't there hearing him say those words. I was protecting you."

Protection, Lily hated that word now. She was not a child; she was great at charms and defence spells and capable of handling the most gruesome news. "I don't need protecting James, I'm not helpless."

"I know, I don't think sometimes."

"Yea, I've noticed." Lily crossed her arms in disgust.

James ignored that comment and moved by his wife to open the window. He checked his watch. "It should be time for the afternoon edition."

Lily didn't like it when her husband changed a subject. He was avoiding the issues she really wanted to talk about and it had been happening far more often than it used to.

Low and behold on the Horizon, there was an owl approaching. Lily and James remained in silence, feeling the cool breeze touch their faces. A minute later the owl landed on the ledge. It was a rather beautiful white owl. She hooted softly and poked out her foot, where attached, was a rolled up copy of the Daily Prophet.

James threw a Knut and the owl caught it in her beak. "James," Lily clucked, placing the Knut into the little pouch tied around the owl's other leg. The owl thanked her with a gentle nip. "Honestly, she could've swallowed it."

But James wasn't paying attention. "Ha!" he said.

Lily looked away from the white owl flying in the distance now. "What."

"Remember how there was a lot of commotion in Europe a month ago; Muggle disasters, which weren't suspicious enough for the wizard ministries to investigate? Well Dumbledore mentioned he was going to keep a close watch on it. It's Grindelwald. He's gaining power again."

Lily's jaw dropped. "But Dumbledore defeated him!" She snatched the paper from her husband's hands.

A New Terror Unfolds read the headline blazoned on the front page.

James raised his eyebrows. "Ahh... defeated, not killed. I don't know much of the story, I've never asked Dumbledore, but Char—" James took in a deep breath, "Charlie had once said, he was incarcerated somewhere in some obscure prison, powers gone, damaged. Besides Dumbledore's a noble man, he'd never kill."

"Well," Lily said, feeling slightly defeated herself. "Great! That's all we need, another disillusioned Dark Lord running mayhem and destruction."

She stared at a very old archival picture of a brown haired man with a long goatee. He was wearing elaborate robes and was pale and grimacing and had finely sculpted cheek bones, but his light grey eyes were so cold, it made Lily's skin crawl. She wondered what he was up to, after all these years in exile. She suddenly smiled to herself, James noticed.

"What?" he asked, suspiciously.

Lily straightened her face. "Voldemort won't be happy."

Across the county, as the sun set, a hooded figure panted and wheezed for breath as he knocked upon a heavy wooden door. He clutched his mid region, as though he had a nasty stitch. He looked left and right, suspicious of everything that moved. He knocked again, a little harder. He was impatient to get inside and away from danger.

The door opened and Severus Snape stared down his hooked nose at the huddling figure on the front porch. He narrowed his eyes from beneath the curtain of greasy hair and viciously smirked at the mass he stood over.

"Well, well, well... look at what the pixies dragged here," he said with great pleasure. "Azkaban not good enough for an arrogant twat like you?"

The hood fell off the boy's head, revealing his untamed emaciated face of Harry Potter. "Shut up, Snivellus!" the boy spat!

Snape's eyes flashed and slammed the door shut into the boy's face, almost knocking him over

Harry yelled in frustration. "This isn't funny, Snape!" he shouted, sounding desperate, his eyes wide with regret now. "I've been hiding out for days... I need—"

The door opened again with a creak. For a moment the boy hesitated, but Harry thought better, giving one last look at the world around him, before walking into the darkness.

Hope you all enjoyed this chapter, I had fun writing it. Don't forget to review :D

Stay tuned for chapter 7

Chapter 7

Agenda

A few months earlier.

Along black water, a boat paddled softly with a small candle hovering in front of it. Two people were within the dingy: At the back of the boat, an old man with a long beard and travelling cloak sat. He looked ahead with his twinkling blue eyes, as the top of his glittering hat grazed the low cave ceiling. While at the front, a wheezing hunchbacked hag, wearing tattered robes grasped the sides of the boat. She didn't seem too keen on water and boats and looked very green.

The dingy rocked with each stroke and the smell of something rotting mingled with fresh moss and stagnant water filled their nostrils. Dumbledore pulled out a tiny silver vinegarette box and held it to his nose, smelling the lavender and rose to take the edge off the odours.

The air in the cave was stale and so hot that sweat formed on Dumbledore's forehead. To pass the time in the uncomfortable conditions, he hummed to himself. However, the humming did not drown the distant screams, the clink of chains, or the sharp snap of a whip that echoed down the rocky tunnel.

The hag wheezed a little louder as they approached the rocky bank, the ceiling above them gaining height as they got nearer. Dumbledore thought whether or not the hag would stop breathing before he even had a chance to get out of the boat.

"We're 'ere," the hag said in a hoarse foreign accent, coughing as she struggled out of the dingy. Her robes dipped into the water as she crawled on to the shore.

"Excellent," said Dumbledore with a hiss. "I trust Dementors do not exist here."

The hag's eyes moved timidly. "Dose foul beazts? No zir, most migrated to your country, zir."

“Certainly,” Dumbledore said with displeasure.

He sighed and got out of the boat, while the hag tied it up to a rusty looking metal peg.

The candle that had hovered in front of the dingy now bobbed along in midair, leading their way into a more lighted cavity of the cave, where the air was even more putrid and hard to breath within.

Dumbledore looked up and saw arched windows carved into the stone, making the cave wall look like Swiss cheese. And light; orange light, yellow and white and some blue or purple shone out of the windows, making them look like giant Christmas lights. Dumbledore would've smiled, perhaps even made a comment about this, but this place was anything but happy and fun.

“Zir... tis way, zir,” the hag croaked, pointing towards a large crack in the cave. Dumbledore followed.

The noise of a few bats squeaking and flapping their wings filled the pathway of an ancient spiral staircase, the stairs worn from hundreds of years of use. They were sticky with blood, so it seemed. Dumbledore stopped short of the first step. With a raise of his bushy white eyebrow, he looked at the hag.

“Prisoner tried to escape las' nigh'.” She shrugged, as though bloodied stairs were a normal occurrence in this God forsaken place.

Dumbledore let the hag climb first before he hitched up his robes, following behind her. The stairway was so cramped, that the hag had trouble fitting through. Dumbledore had to give her a bit of a nudge to hurry his expedition. He had already been the unfortunate victim of seven bat droppings and did not wish to acquire some more.

The screams grew louder as they approached the first landing. As Dumbledore climbed the last step, he observed his surroundings; wrought iron bars stood place everywhere, chains snaked on the slimy ground or walls, and the flicking dim light was cold and uninviting. There was also a tang of blood in the air. The humidly

made the trip even more unpleasant. The old wizard crinkled his nose, and waited for the hag to wobble alongside him. The journey up the stairs made her clutch her chest to the point she had to lean back against the wall to regain some strength.

"Tis way, zir," she managed to wheeze.

Dumbledore followed the hag through long dark hallways and secret trapdoors. Dirty long-nailed hands sometimes reached through bars.

"GER' OFF!" the hag screamed. She bashed the hands away with a knobbly baton she had retrieved from her cloak. "You kept 'em up and there'll be noooooooo food for the lot of you bastards!"

Dumbledore kept his focus ahead, he did not want to view those faces, did not want to see their dead looking eyes, their lips pleading with silent words.

His dark thoughts disappeared when they met a couple of Finnish Aurors along the way, bent over in deep conversation, each holding a goblet of mead. The Aurors bowed their heads at the sight of the old English headmaster. Dumbledore greeted them the same way. The prison faculty was filled with Aurors and workers from all over Europe, with some ostracised in their own community. This place being the only place they could earn a living.

"Ere'," said the hag as she stopped at a dungeon door. The door was rusty, but sturdy and filled with heavy enchantments; he felt the strong magic prickling his skin like a thousand spiders crawling on his flesh.

Dumbledore looked around as the hag fumbled for the right key in her long key chain. The rocky walls around him were constantly dripping with water, and the iron was damp and eroding. With a click of the key the door opened with a howling shriek.

The hag stood aside, conjured a small rickety stool and sat down. Dumbledore took this as a cue to enter the cell. His eyes needed adjusting to the darkness and his nose needed adjusting to the horrible smell. The full moon's light washed over the room with a cold

eerie light that made the deadly silence even more permeable. There was no warmth, no sense of happiness, and no sense of hope.

The door closed behind him with an ear piercing shriek, which made him cringe.

His footsteps echoed.

The ceiling was high, filled with chains, spikes and restraints and a cage hung in the middle like a ghastly looking chandelier. Though there was only one man in here, living. Scattered bones and rotting corpses were kicked towards a corner into a pile. Covered with salt, it seemed, to Dumbledore's disgust. He covered his mouth and pressed on.

Dumbledore could see a figure's outline in another corner, sitting cross-legged and proud. He was still breathing. After all these years, one man had managed to outlive all his cellmates, fuelled by his ambitions and greed.

This man chuckled lightly, his chains moving. "Well... you're a sight for sore eyes."

"It's been awhile hasn't it, Gellert?" Dumbledore said, as he moved closer.

He ignited his wand and observed the man's features. He was old, older than Dumbledore himself. The man's beard and hair trailed the floor in knots and dirty wet clumps. His eyes were desperately sunken and dark. His wrinkles were deep, his skin grey and flaking.

"Gellert... I have not heard my name in awhile." He remembered, a slight smile lifting the corners of his mouth. He obviously had not smiled for years. He then frowned "No one calls me by my name no more."

"Gellert... have you heard of Voldemort?"

The man's eyes lit up. "Ahh, that English bastard, what's his name... Riddle... Timothy, Titus..."

“Tom Riddle.”

“I do not have the luxury of newspapers in here, but I do hear things. He is winning the battle is he not?”

“I wouldn’t say winning...” Dumbledore said slowly, eyes twinkling. Following in the hag’s steps, he conjured a chair of his own, and a bottle of brandy, with two glasses.

The prisoner stiffened up, eyeing the bottle suspiciously. “What are you doing here, Albus?”

Dumbledore poured out the brandy and handed the glass to the man. “I have come... I have a favour of you to ask...”

The imprisoned man narrowed his grey eyes. “Oho, and what do I get in return? I’ve been here for over sixty years, no thanks to you.” The man smirked, sipping his brandy after a moment of hesitation.

“Believe me, Lord Grindelwald; you will not pass this opportunity up.”

Hearing his full name swelled the old man with renewed pride. “Tell me then.”

Dumbledore observed the once powerful wizard intently, glass to his lips, though not drinking. “But first, what have you heard about Harry Potter?”

The present.

A tall, long-haired boy, with the appearance of a corpse, looked around the dark living-room of Severus Snape’s dwelling. His fingers prodded the coffee table where a pile of old tomes sat. But the couch -- though covered in a thick layer of dust -- was ever so inviting. The boy sat down slowly, pain stretching over his face. He had felt nothing as comfortable as the lumpy couch in over a year. He outspread his arms over the back of it and closed his eyes.

He suddenly felt a rush of air across his face. But did not open his eyes, instead he savoured the moment of serenity.

“Do try and keep your filth off the furniture,” Snape hissed as he passed him.

“Like they’re not filthy already,” the emaciated boy retorted.

Silence. But the tangible feeling of hate spread from Snape like licks of flames.

“Where have you been hiding?”

“Here and there... anywhere dark,” the boy said.

“How did you escape Azkaban?”

The boy crinkled his brow. He opened his eyes for a moment, and thought. The truth was that his mind was completely blank on details. “I... I don’t know...can’t remem--” It was bizarre and slightly unnerving that he could not recall the escape. He straightened his face.

Snape looked at him suspiciously, but decided to press on with other questions. “What did the Aurors do to you?”

The change of questions relaxed the troubled teen and he closed his eyes again. “You know. You just want to hear it for your own perverse pleasure.”

“I have no qualms in seeing you suffer, Potter,” Snape said. He kicked the boy’s dirty and bloodied feet from the coffee table where he had rested them. “When was the last time you ate?” he continued.

“A rat two days ago... do you want to know when my bowels last moved?” He opened his sunken eyes and saw Snape standing in front of him, arms crossed with the intent at staring at him to death.

“Why did you come here?” Snape asked; his voice more deadly.

"Um... I thought we silently established that fact already!" the boy said, waving his scarred hand around.

"Don't give me cheek boy! You're still below me--"

"Below you?" he said with surprise, he straightened up on the couch. "Since when have I lost—"

Snape smirked. He saved this particular information til last. "You were in Azkaban for awhile. The Dark Lord disapproves of weakness, and getting caught displeased him. You let your emotion come between you and our master's orders."

The boy swore. "How could he-- I want back in! I want to be at the top of the chain—"

"Power is corrupting you more ways than one, Potter... be careful. The Dark Lord likes ambition, but too much of it brings discord to the rest of us, and he doesn't want a weak link, which you are proving to be, despite your powers."

He smiled. "Like he's never planned to kill me, anyway."

Snape narrowed his eyes. "At least you know what's coming, if you don't be careful."

"Oh," the boy laughed, "I know it's coming, careful or not."

"Did they break you?"

The boy looked away, "I'm not weak..." Dark flashes, chains, screams, laughter leaped into his mind. He brushed them away as quickly as they came.

Snape looked up and down at him. "Get washed and into bed... I'll have the house elf fix you some dinner and Sigmus Pritchard will consult your wounds."

Potter scowled at being told what to do and crossed his own arms in retaliation.

“While you’re under my roof, you’re to obey my every command,” Snape demanded, taking in the look of outrage on Potter’s face with pleasure. “I daresay... it will be a change for you.”

Snape suddenly grabbed the scruff of the boy’s neck and pushed him out of the living room.

In a cave on the other side of the country, the stranger in the new world, Harry, woke up. His mind was reeling, his heart palpitating, and a sense of confusion was setting into a hard ball enclosing his heart. He had just had a rather vivid dream, too real to have been a dream, in fact.

He had seen everything his other self was doing— through his eyes, just like it had happened with Voldemort in his own world.

But Harry had no time to sit and think. He heard voices whispering outside and remained completely still.

“This way,” one said.

“Wait! Tony, what if there’s... a ghost in there—“

They sounded like children’s voices. One could’ve mistaken them for playful voices, but there was fear in them, Harry noticed.

“Don’t be stupid, Ashley... a Dementor maybe.”

“TONY!!” The little girl screamed. “That’s not funny!”

Harry saw wand light ignite at the very edge of the cave, the light and the shadows that it made drew closer and bigger. Harry stood up, leaned against the wall and disillusioned himself. What he saw next made his insides squirm.

The boy, perhaps ten years old, had a disfigured face; his right side mainly. It was red and deeply scarred with white lines. His right eye was white and foggy and part of his hair was missing, his ear completely gone. His arm was just the same. And what shocked

Harry most was the dark mark, as black as ink on his left forearm when his cloak drifted back.

The little girl, who had been scared moments before, gripped on to the boy's cloak.

She was a foot shorter than the boy, her hair cut so short that Harry could see bruises and cuts on her scalp.

"I want to go home..." she said, scared and sad.

"We can't stupid! We can't go back, not yet! They'll catch us. We were lucky to escape."

What kind of a world was this? Harry thought with horror.

Harry moved his hand an inch and some gravel fell to the ground, both children looked at the very spot he stood camouflaged, and screamed.

So what did you guys think? Please review.

Stay tuned for Chapter 8

Chapter 8

Trust

Harry cringed as the children's screams made the entire cave ring with eerie echoes, and his ears almost pop. Sharp rocks and sand began falling onto their heads. Harry could hear a distant rumble within the rocks as it strained to keep itself intact. He was frightened that the cave, holding him safe, would fall in killing everyone. Experiencing terror, Harry's protective camouflage wore off so that he stood face to face with the twins belonging to the two children.

"Shhh," Harry said, "I won't hurt you." He was trying his best to shut them up.

The boy named Tony bit his lip, eyes searching the roof of the cave. He too realised the danger their yells were causing. He clutched the young girl tightly, muffling her shouts.

The children fought for breath, their eyes wide with apprehension at both Harry and the cave. "I know who you are," he whispered, looking at Harry again. "You-you were there when you killed our parents. You laughed. You hurt us... you ordered the Death Eaters to take us."

"What?" asked Harry, feeling aghast. "I never did anything to you." Of course, then, Harry remembered that they all thought he was his other self... his malicious double.

"You killed my mummy and daddy." The little girl named Ashley sobbed, her face screwed up in tears. She looked so exhausted.

Harry opened his mouth, but nothing came out. His other self seemed to have no limits with the evil he inflicts on others.

"I don't suppose you would remember," the boy said, venom laced his voice. "You probably kill people and kidnap kids all the time. It's like a game to you people." The little girl cried into the boy's cloak. "I'll tell you something, Potter... you didn't break me or my sister. We haven't changed at all for your master and we'll die before we do his bidding to take over the United Kingdom and Europe. Our parents were on

the good side, so we'll die for the good side too." The girl cried harder, perhaps frightened at her brother's words.

Harry was taken a back by such mature-minded little boy. He looked into the boy's blue eyes, there was such determination in them, such fierce hate. How could they learn to trust him? Not when they witnessed the death of their parents, and then for this world's Harry to laugh and mock at their murders.

"I hope they did very bad things to you in Azkaban," the little girl sobbed, wiping her eyes.

"Wait!" said Harry, one hand outstretched, while in his other hand he pointed his wand into the air. "You've mistaken me for someone else... someone who looks like me."

"Yeah righ—"

BANG!

Harry started. He whipped around to the source of the noise. Tony and Ashley hadn't caused the sound. Instead they both griped each other, not willing to lose the other. Harry heard shouts and laughter from outside the cave and now both children seemed to shrink in a primitive effort to become invisible to this new threat.

"Oh no!" the girl squealed. "I don't want to go back," she cried. The kids turned to bolt. But Harry, by instinct, grabbed both; his hands cupped their mouths, and hugged them tight against the wall covered in shadow.

Harry swore to himself, the Death Eaters had followed the children.

"I heard them somewhere," a deep voice rang. A light danced on the stones ahead of Harry. "I knew they'd come in here."

"Ahh yes... little bitsy children..." droned a female voice, Harry remembered with a shiver that it belonged to Bellatrix Lestrange. "You can't escape, little children. You belong to us now. Granny hates the both of you. In fact, if you went home, she'd call the Aurors in."

Another female Death Eater laughed; giggled with joy. She sounded like a happy hyena, that's found meat to scavenge. "Come on now, Tony...Ashley... be good and come out! If you do, the punishment will be less than severe, but only just." She giggled.

"Alecto, will stop terrifying the children. They won't come out if you threaten them."

"Shut up, Sinistra!" Alecto spat, in retaliation.

"I smell blood," said another. To Harry's horror he saw Fenrir Greyback's shadow loom near. He closed his eyes, the werewolf's yellow fangs bared and covered with blood, flashed in the darkness.

Both children, tried to squirm away, but Harry made sure he held tight.

"I'll have you both for dinner, I will—"

"No you won't, Greyback!" Bellatrix spat! "If you lay your stinking fangs on my apprentices, I'll make sure you'll pay..."

Greyback laughed sarcastically. "Bella, your rats are complete useless bits of rubbish! They wouldn't recognise an enemy if it danced in front of their faces." The Death Eaters halted their search as they squabbled amongst themselves.

Harry needed to Disapparate the children to safety. Time was running out fast. If they were caught, Harry would never find a way to get back home. His half-formed plan vanished when the girl bit his arm and ran.

"NO!" both Harry and the boy yelled, as the girl fell straight into Greyback's clutches. She screamed. Harry froze.

"Gotcha, lil' missy."

"NO! NO! NO!" she screamed. Her legs kicked the air as Greyback's mouth was closed in onto her neck.

Oh no, Harry thought. "Stupefy!" The jet of red light was aimed at Greyback but Bellatrix shunned it a way with the flick of her wand. Ashley stopped moving, she was watching Harry now with trepidation.

Bella seemed stunned, as though she had been hit by Harry's curse. Then she smiled, awkward at first. There was nothing friendly about it; she was really smirking at the situation.

"Well... well ... well! Protecting the little ones are you now, Potter dear?" Bellatrix said. She sounded winded, like she had been running. She licked her lips while Harry struggled to keep the boy from running into their clutches as well. "Azkaban really has fried your brain. I don't blame you, really, after what those Aurors do... HA! And they call us depraved! How ironic..."

"Let her go," Harry said confidently, his anger at Bellatrix swelling into a giant ball ready to burst. Greyback growled at Harry. And then Harry said something which was risky and sounded revolting to his heart. "I found them first."

The boy Harry was trying to protect yelled and kicked Harry. He ignored the sharp pain in his left knee.

"Hand her over Greyback," Harry gritted.

What surprised him was that the Death Eaters had listened to his command. Greyback let go of the flailing girl. She stumbled and backed away from the Death Eaters, inching her way slowly to Harry and her brother. How high up in the chain of command was the Harry in this world? He felt a sick thrill of power sizzle through his veins. But was it his power? His own thoughts? Harry swatted this doubt from his mind. He'll worry about it later.

Bellatrix scowled as Ashley reluctantly returned to Harry. "YOU CAN'T JUST STEAL MY PROPERTY, POTTER!" she screamed. "You've got no right!"

There was a surge of wrath through Harry. How could they steal children from their parents and brainwash them to become murderous monsters? The girl inched forward, carefully tugging on

the boy's sleeve. She wasn't crying anymore, instead Harry could see her wand poking from her tattered sleeve. The Death Eaters had already begun training the children into fighting soldiers.

Harry grabbed her; she screamed. He caught her wand arm before she had the chance to do anything drastic.

"You can't take them!" Bella screeched again, wand pointing between Harry's eyes. Green sparks flew out of the wand.

Harry focused on Bellatrix and the group of Death Eaters all staring at him hungrily. "I'm taking them, and you can't stop me."

Holding tight onto both children, he whirled around. With a loud crack, Harry felt a familiar clenching feeling around his body, like a vice was slowly crushing him. The space was cramped and noisy with whooshing air, mixed with Bella's screams of outrage. Then there was nothing, but peace.

He opened his eyes and felt a cold breeze on his face. They were all panting for breath. For a moment Harry couldn't believe what had just happened. He looked at his feet, still acutely aware that he was holding onto two very scared, yet dangerous children.

He was standing in a grassy park. The sky was filled with looming clouds and the threat of rain. He had just escaped Death Eaters without them even challenging his authority. Adrenaline rushed through Harry's body and his heart was beating fast. It was all too good to be true. He almost felt victorious.

Outside the buzz he was experiencing in his head he heard sniffing. The little girl was sobbing. Harry realised that he was holding the kids tightly enough to feel their own scared pulses. Harry felt hot, his blood still surging with emotion. But now the cool breeze was beginning to seep into his skin. Goose bumps erupted all over, making him shiver. The adrenaline was beginning to wear off, allowing his mind to form clear and rational thoughts.

Where to now? He thought. Panic set in and then another foreboding fear rested in his heart. What was he going to do with two small kids?

He can't take care of them, not when this world was a completely strange place.

"Wh-what are you going to do to us?" the boy finally spoke. Harry looked ahead and spotted a swing and a slippery slide. They were in a Muggle park. Behind the trees he could a couple of scattered cars zooming by.

"I'm not going to hurt you," Harry said still focused ahead.

"Yeah right," the boy said, but there was resignation in his voice.

"Bella would've conditioned us if she got us again," the little girl said, trembling. Harry wondered if the girl even knew what the word conditioned meant. "That's what happens if you ever tried to escape. And...and if you escape three times, y-you have to be killed."

"It's treason against the Dark Lord." Tony grimaced. "You should know the laws, Potter."

Harry hesitated, then said, "I'm going to try and get you two to safety, but in order to do that, I need your help."

"Whe- where are you going to take us?" Ashley asked.

"Somewhere where we're safe from the Ministry and Voldemort."

Both children gasped in fear because Harry had said Voldemort's name; they had even stopped struggling against Harry's grip to stare at him.

"You're not supposed to say his name, Potter... that's treason too."

"Everything's treason when you're dealing with him." Harry furrowed his brow at the boy. "Well I'm different now," he added pretending to be the other Harry. "Prison's changed me. I'm on the good side now."

Tony narrowed his eyes. "We're not stupid, you know. We've fallen plenty times for your tricks. Just because Dolores Umbridge oversaw your imprisonment doesn't mean you've changed!"

“Umbridge? What does she do? I-I... mean I’ve forgotten some things while I was in Azkaban.”

Tony narrowed his eyes. “Umbridge is the Minister of, um, Law Enforcement and Interrogation. She’s been in charge, for like ten years.”

“Hasn’t Dumbledore done anything about it?” Harry blurted.

“Dumbledore?” the boy asked in surprise. “He’s nothing! He works with the Ministry sometimes...interrogates and imprisons people too. Dad said he’s got his own secret organisation to protect us from the Dark Side. But if Dumbledore does, how come he didn’t rescue us? How come he left us to rot?” Tony clenched his hands into fists. “Maybe it’s because my parents wanted nothing to do with the Order. We weren’t worthy enough to be saved.”

“He’s... he’s got his reasons for it, I suppose,” Harry said cautiously. In his own world, reading Skeeter’s articles about her book, *The Life and Lies of Dumbledore*, and listening to Aunt Muriel’s gossip made Harry a little more than confused about Dumbledore. But he still trusted his mentor. Dumbledore had only died three months ago, and he had entrusted Harry with a secret mission. No nasty rumours would tarnish Harry’s memories of Dumbledore, he told himself several times.

Tony shook his head. “He doesn’t care. When Hogwarts was open, he did his best to protect the school and the students. He even let Muggle-borns in... The Dark Lord was greatly displeased about that. I was really, really looking forward to going to Hogwarts. Then, of course, the Chamber of Secrets opened...”

“Oh...” Some things never changed, Harry thought.

“Do you remember what happened next?”

Harry shook his head.

Tony continued. "A couple of Slytherins rounded all the Muggle-borns up, on the Dark Lord's order. They were all killed. The Monster's still loose. Some say you were the group's leader, but Dumbledore didn't think so. You had left school six weeks before the attack. That's when you started to turn bad... real bad."

Harry could learn a lot from these kids. Could learn enough for him to familiarize himself with the world and to survive within it.

"You both have wands, and you haven't tried to curse me yet."

"Yeah well, you're one of the Dark Lord's closest men, Potter. We've seen the destruction you can do with a wave of your hand. We wouldn't even dare to hex you. And we can't anyway... there's a curse that's put on us if we fight back until we've been fully trained."

Harry raised an eyebrow. "Look, if I let you both go, where would you go?"

"Home," Ashley said.

"We can't," the boy stressed. "We'd just keep running."

"What for the rest of your lives?" The children looked at each other. Harry sighed. "If I was really bad, what would I have done to you by know?"

"Crucioed us."

"And I haven't."

"You could be tricking us..."

He loosened his grip on their arms and hoped that it wasn't a stupid thing to do. "I'm not. I'm going to let you both go. You'll have the choice of running away or you can follow me and be safe..."

The children had been tortured for a long time Harry speculated. He couldn't stop staring at their scars and wounds. He wouldn't have been surprised if they dashed off.

Harry walked forward a few steps, his black robes billowing in the breeze. He was met with only silence and cold air. After a moment, fearing that the children had run away, he turned around.

Tony and Ashley stood side by side hugging each other, eyes glued on Harry's like preying owls.

"I guess you'll be following me?" Harry said, shivering now. Now he was really surprised. Why would two children who had suffered at the hands of Death Eaters trust him enough to follow him? It didn't make sense. Brainwashed, or perhaps the moment of escape wore off, now that they knew that had nowhere to go.

He stared ahead; they were alone in a deserted park with nothing to protect them from the elements. He knew where he'll head to next. He just wasn't sure on how they'd react. Harry trudged forward, the wet grass sliding along with trouser legs and robes, soaking them. He knew, could feel the kids following him.

"Your names are Ashley and Tony, right?" Harry asked, as he halted by a set of grossly coloured monkey bars. Not to far off, the tar on the road glittered with the light rain.

"The little girl nodded. "Y-yes, Ashley and Tony Pettigrew."

"Shut up, Ash!" the boy said and the girl screeched when her brother yanked her arm.

"That's enough!" Harry said. His heart fluttered again. Pettigrew's children. Peter Pettigrew? Harry felt a sense of revulsion spread throughout his body like wildfire. "Peter..."

"Yeah, that's our dad," Tony said, resigning to the fact that Harry knew their secret.

"And... and he was good, was he?"

"Yeah..." he said outraged at such a question. "Don't you dare say anything bad about our father, Potter! He saved your dad's life!"

Harry bit his lip, curious indeed. So Peter was good in this world and had rescued James in some way. Harry snorted. If only Peter had the guts in my own world, he thought bitterly.

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to sound rude..." In the distance they heard a few cars skidding along the road. Probably kids drag racing. Once again Harry thought of the immediate danger they were all in. "Look... we really need to get out of here."

"Where are we going?" Ashley asked. She made the motion to follow Harry, but Tony stopped her and made sure he held her hand tightly.

"Yeah, where exactly are you planning on taking us?"

"Just follow me, it's not too far away," Harry said, walking through shrubs and away from a set of swings squeaking in the breeze. He focused ahead to the neatly manicured lawns and the pinprick lights floating out of the curtained windows of the boring little houses. He wouldn't confront them till mid morning. For now, they'd find somewhere warm to sleep near by.

His mind was still reeling at the fact he was now protecting Pettigrew's children.

Harry hated the silence, and it was no different at Spinners End. The house was filled with too much of it, and it was also suffocating with dust and a musty smell of too many dead insects left to rot on cracks in the walls and furniture. He lay awake in the dark. It had been hours since he had first arrived here. The soft bed he lay on seemed to swallow him in. And the blankets on him were heavy enough to keep him still. Harry wondered if Snape had placed a charm on the sheets to make them feel like they weighed a ton. Nevertheless, he could not move onto his side. He wished he could. The fetal position had become his favorite while in prison. It was his only protection from the cold and the pain. Instead, Harry continued staring at the black ceiling, ignoring the dull pain in his back. Listening to his heart and his long deep breaths calmed him in the dark. It was a kind distraction to the swirling silence in his head.

Harry hadn't felt so clean in over a year. It felt gloriously good that his face was once again smooth and soft without that pathetic beard he had sprouted. His hair, though still long had been washed, then untangled and a charm had been used to remove the louse infestation. And pajamas! Harry had forgotten the coziness of them.

He had once again clasped the concept of safety. But only just. Nothing could ever compare to the safety of his mother and his family. Now they were gone from his life and he never wanted to be reunited with them. Not that they would try anyway after what he had done to them.

Harry was an insomniac. In Azkaban he had learned not to sleep so long. He learnt that the dark was his enemy, and when the cell door opened, to pray for whatever sufferings to be inflicted, to end quickly. The cell they kept Harry in had charms to suppress his magic.

In the end, he would try and concentrate on the sounds of his breathing to distract him from the world around him and from the images of the sins haunting him.

Now Harry was comfortable at least in his bed. He forced himself not to think about Azkaban, but his thoughts quickly focused on the curious new being, accidentally thrown into this world. Harry would never in a million years dreamed of meeting his extra dimensional self, and, in a trillion years more, never imagined he would feel so disappointed in this other Harry. He would have to deal with him later. Disappointment shouldn't cloud the fact that this strange new Harry was a threat, a giant threat. He would keep him a secret as long as possible.

Then Harry smiled within the darkness. He could use this doppelganger as a decoy. Yes... perfect...

Pain spiked in his stomach making Harry yelp. His plans to control this new Harry vanished into wisps of smoke. His body was tired and his mind exhausted. Old Sigmus Pritchard poked and prodded his body and mended his wounds as best as he could, but some still remained.

Harry heard the floorboards creak outside his room. He held his breath. He knew Snape would check up on him. Guarding him like a hawk. The door opened with a loud creak. It needed its hinges oiled badly. Harry, still holding his breath, heard Snape's heavy dragon hide boots clinking along.

"How can a once fearless arrogant fool turn into a scared little mouse as you are now?" Snape's words punctured the silence like crisp new snowflakes falling for the first time. The words also pierced his body like a cursed dagger.

"Fuc—" Harry's mouth suddenly sealed on itself. He panicked, but there was no fear.

Snape was mocking him in his weakest moment. Snape had been the Dark Lord's favorite until Harry pushed passed him. There was always an element of jealousy Harry thought, envy which ran rife with James Potter and now passed onto him. Though Harry could never know truly, the wizard was a master at Occlumency as Harry is. But there was an unwritten rule to never speak of this ability to the Dark Lord. So neither Snape nor Harry would risk betraying each other's lives, for then, their own lives would end as well.

"Manners Potter; Swearing is not allowed in my house."

Harry mumbled, unable to speak until the curse was lifted, which Snape did after letting him make incoherent sounds for a minute.

"Then don't mock me," he managed to say in the end. "Why did you come in here anyway? Felt the urge to sing me a lullaby?" he teased, staring into the dark outline of Snape's face.

He could feel Snape sneering in the blackness of the room. "I've come with some... interesting news... and a sleeping potion."

"I don't need a sleeping—"

"Yes you do. Sigmus says you must sleep in order to heal properly. You're in dire need of rest."

"Since when do you care if I need sleep or not?" Harry spat, trying to wriggle in his bed. He suddenly felt like a sitting duck.

Snape snorted, Harry could hear him pouring something into a glass. "You're right, I don't care, but you are still the Dark Lord's servant and my ally despite our... mutual differences. It's my duty to protect those on our side and that unfortunately includes you."

"That makes me feel all warm and fuzzy," Harry replied, through clenched teeth. "What's this news you bring anyway?"

Snape paused for a moment as though he was deliberating on the information. "Actually I think I'll tell you tomorrow now."

"Stop undermining me!" Harry yelled, suddenly angered at Snape's unpredictability. "You come in here taunting me and I can't even defend myself."

"Ahh, feeling vulnerable are you? You should be used to it by now."

"WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?" Harry screamed, enraged now.

Snape's nose was inches from his as Harry pulled and kicked at his blankets. Snape was not perturbed by his words.

"You should sleep now," he added as Harry struggled. This time there was no hint of sarcasm. It wasn't a suggestion but a command.

Before Harry could protect himself, his jaw was wrenched open with force. A cool disgusting tasting liquid trickled down his throat against his will. Harry spluttered, coughed. However, like the moments with his attackers in Azkaban, he inevitably gave in.

"Bastard..." Harry mumbled, his eyelids heavy with sleep. Harry felt his world closing in, urging him to finally have a long night's sleep which he hadn't had since his school days at Hogwarts. "Bastard," he said again.

Snape sighed. "Thank you for pointing that out for the umpteenth time. And remember Potter, you are still underneath me... I can make your life just as miserable as those Aurors did..." His words drifted off.

Harry would've laughed. Laughed at how stupid it was to come here in the first place, but the darkness crept into his eyes and he fell asleep.

Though, before dreams truly claimed him, he was sure he heard someone else in the room talking with Snape. A word, curious snippets of words it or he said... an unfamiliar voice. "Cut.... Skin... bleed...heart." Curious words indeed. He vaguely wanted to wake up to see what was going on, but in his mind, Harry relished the thought of sleep.

Please review, and make me a very happy gal. Thanks.

Stay tuned for chapter 9. It's gonna be a bumpy ride.

Hahukum Konn What I found interesting, by the way, is that although your fic came out before Deathly Hallows you have Grindelwald still alive, moldering away in a prison:

TWV: I knowwwwww! What a freaky coincidence! I know this fic was AU to begin with, but should I change Grindelwald's name to Gellert?

Chapter 9

A familiar Hate

Under a dark and starry night there was a forgotten little church on top of a hill, overlooking a town. The church was in a bad state of disrepair: its stained glass windows shattered to pieces, and its inside filled with nesting birds and rats. An owl hooted in the church tower, where once, a magnificent bronze bell hung in all its glory.

But on the decaying roof, a man sat quietly on the ledge, sucking on a sherbet lemon, watching the stars above as they twinkled happily. It was certainly a strange sight to behold for any Muggle to witness, let alone for a wizard and witch. However, Dumbledore wanted to experience a bird's eye view of the little town beneath, filled with pinpricks of warm light drifting from the cottage windows.

Though, this strange expedition had its purpose.

There was a pop to his side and a man, tall like Dumbledore, wearing magnificent robes like him, just as old, and just as great in his own way sat beside Dumbledore.

This wizard wore a crimson cloak. He pulled down the long hood, sniffing the fresh air. He had a silver goatee and moustache with pointy ends, his slick hair pulled into a ponytail, his piercing eyes as bright as the stars and his eyebrows bushier than Dumbledore could ever manage.

"Well, Albus," started the wizard with the crimson cloak. "This certainly is not the place I would've expected to have a chat. But alas..."

"Alas..." replied Dumbledore. He swung his feet a little as his robes fluttered in the breeze. "Sherbet lemon, Gellert?"

Grindelwald flicked a bushy eyebrow. "Still like them after all this time? I wouldn't mind one myself." The wizard helped himself to a sweet from the paper bag Dumbledore held out.

Just like the old days, thought Dumbledore.

“You’ve cleaned up well, Gellert. I hope I have not exhausted you too much in your interesting exploits and adventures. I particularly amazed that you’ve managed to tear apart so many foundations in such a short period of time.”

“Ahh yes, I have to admit, my skills have rusted a little,” he chortled, like it had been fairly simple thing to do, to destroy a village. Like his sixty years in prison had been a mere holiday.

“Well, you must gain Voldemort’s attention... but tell me, have you thought of any plans, as of yet? Do not get carried away Gellert. You know your true mission.”

Grindelwald looked aghast. “Of course I haven’t forgotten!”

Dumbledore wasn’t so sure about this. Using Grindelwald had been a risk from day one. There was always a chance that he would gain power without helping the Order. But he had to take a chance with his once best friend and admirer. He looked at him grimly through his half-moon spectacles.

Grindelwald sat with his face well composed, staring right ahead to the little town below them. “Why are you helping me gain power?” he asked, looking at Dumbledore from the corner of his eyes.

“Because you wouldn’t be any use to me if you did not have it.”

Grindelwald raised an eyebrow. “Really, Albus? It seems to me I’m doing the greater good I was put in prison for.”

Dumbledore ignored his words, letting them wash over him. “You must stay in England now...that is the only way Voldemort will realise the competition.”

“I’ve already started,” he said curtly.

“Good,” stated Dumbledore, neither pleased nor disheartened.

“Do you want me to kill him?”

Dumbledore paused. “Try to avoid it.”

A wrinkled smile curled on Grindelwald’s lips. “So be it...”

“I’m worried that you do not have the skills to match up to Lord Voldemort. Besides that is not your job to do it.”

“Oh I wasn’t talking about that fellow, Dear Albus, I was talking about... the boy...”

Pausing for a second or two, Dumbledore scratched the crook of his nose. “First you will deal with the plan set out step by step...”

“There’s something your not telling me about Harry Potter is there? Is he the boy who is meant to kill--”

“There are plenty of things which you do not need to know about Harry Potter.”

Grindelwald knitted his brow, but he did not press further with the details. Instead, Dumbledore knew this wizard was itching to ask him something that had been on his mind since his release. “Abus, do you still have it?”

“Why is that such a concern to you, Gellert?”

“I’ve heard rumours that... why ... that you lost the wand to... to Tom Riddle years ago.”

Dumbledore did not answer for awhile. “Two years before Hogwarts closed.”

Grindelwald’s eyes lit up for a moment. “And you survived? This Riddle did not take over the school?”

“By chance I survived, yes. However that story is for another time... I kept him out of Hogwarts for as long as I could. But by then the Muggleborns were dwindling in numbers. They pulled out one by one.

Then the Chamber opened, according to Voldemort's plan and the rest was tragically murdered. Now Hogwarts is closed, the wards are down and dark magic surrounds it. What most wizards don't know is that Voldemort had taken over the school soon after with the elder wand in hand, I wasn't there when it happened, I am still too weak since Tom nearly defeated me. Hogwarts is the Dark Lord's hiding place." Dumbledore said this calmly, though the bitterness still seeped through every pore in his body.

Grindelwald fiddled with his goatee. "I knew that not all the truth about Hogwarts had made it out. What else? Tell me more about life here?"

Dumbledore nodded sullenly. "Meanwhile, the ministry are too embroiled between themselves; morals and ethics have been destroyed in the last two decades in order to fight Voldemort. Rufus Scrimgeour has been the minister for the last decade, ruthless in his capabilities, growing more paranoid by the day. He has his own elite Aurors to protect him. Thomas MacCloud, Head of the Auror department is very much powerful yet merciless wizard, some say that he is imbalanced and cruel. Dolores Umbridge is the Senior Undersecretary and Minister for Interrogation and the Prevention of Crime and Sedition. She abolished laws, allowing Aurors to use the unforgivables. She's given the Aurors power to search and violate people's privy and to interrogate any way possible.

"There are witch hunts. Say one word against the ministry and they'll label you a Death Eater and cart you away and brainwash your family then label them as traitors. The Ministry are just as bad in their exploits. In order to protect us, Scrimgeour says, we must change our ways. Match up to Voldemort with the same use of dark magic. "Fight the dark with the dark is the only way we will win." He had said in an infamous speech years ago. I have since pulled away most ties with them. I do not interfere. I have the Order now, with over two thousand members and still growing.

"Gellert, we must remain in between this chaos: Between Voldemort and The ministry."

"But you want me to destroy--"

“Destroy, ruin foundations yes, to kill no. Give Voldemort the right illusion.”

“Right.”

“I cannot battle him, Gellert. I cannot die until there is someone strong enough to fight him... stronger than me... working for the light. Voldemort damaged me. I am half the man I was long ago.”

Grindelwald looked away, as though those words uttered were shameful and humiliating.

“The prophecy then? Harry Potter?” He popped the question still hoping to ruse Dumbledore into answering.

“Our conversation should end here, Gellert.”

Grindelwald looked disappointed. “Until we next meet.” And with a pop he vanished once more.

Dumbledore sighed, staring at the same spot Grindelwald had sat. He tapped his new wand. It would never match the power and strength of the elder wand. But the elder wand in Voldemort’s possession will never truly be at his command. Dumbledore’s eyes twinkled at this fact.

Satisfied with the evening’s events he pulled out a tattered old note which looked as though it had been folded and crushed then flattened many times. Inside in neat handwriting scrolled across the piece of paper were the words.

I did what you asked me to do, yet you’ve betrayed me.

Dumbledore closed the letter he had treasured for long. He treasured the words for its meaning, for its silent threat. Dumbledore knew his day would come.

Unicorn hair and holly, 12 inches... phoenix feather and yew, 13 inches... phoenix feather and holly, 11 inches... Dumbledore

repeated this in his mind. He then vanished from the church roof with a crack.

Harry slowly awoke to a cold and dreamy day. His eyes were still closed, but he felt the chill and frost that had spread over his body. The early morning light permeated through his eyelids, and he heard a few birds twittering in the distance, and a garbage truck as it slowly made its way down the street emptying bins. Harry's stomach also made some loud angry grumbles. They were all normal sounds to Harry's ears. It was all perfectly normal... like he was still in his own world, but with a few major differences. For one, there were also two other sounds... two different pitched snores from two children he had rescued and were now sleeping by his sides.

Harry opened his eyes. They were sticky with gooey muck that had accumulated overnight. He wiped them and slowly popped up on his elbows staring around. Tony and Ashley still slept, huddling each other tightly. They had found refuge beneath a white gazebo covered with pink roses in someone's backyard last night. And as Harry stretched and rubbed the aches in his neck, he noticed the back door to the house was creaking open.

"Shit," Harry hissed, as he quickly flattened himself onto the gazebo floor. The door was directly opposite, so anyone could spot them and scream. They were trespassing.

"whzgoinon?" said Tony, blinking, his blue eyes confused. By accident, Harry had startled him awake.

Harry cupped his hand over his mouth. "Shhh... stay low, we don't want to be seen."

A plump woman with ragged brown hair and wearing a pink dressing gown stepped outside. She took one look at the overflowing bin, and rolled her eyes. With a huff she turned around and entered the house again. "STEVEN! YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO TAKE THE BLOODY BIN OUT!"

"I forgot," he replied, from within the house.

“SECOND WEEK IN A ROW--”

In amidst the domestic dispute, Tony woke Ashley and followed Harry's silent moments as he snaked his way out of the Gazebo. They had entered the back gate with a simple Alohomora, so they shall exit the same way. With the children closely behind Harry was able to relax slightly when they pushed their way through the scrubs into the front yard and into the street, yet Harry felt very exposed, almost naked.

If anyone looked out the window now, they would see three very strange cloaked and dirty figures on the footpath.

Tony and Ashley had their hoods up, their cloaks drawn around them tightly. They wounds stung in the fresh air, and no doubt Harry knew they felt ashamed by their scars.

“W-w-where to n-n-now?” asked the tiny girl, trying to stifle a yawn.

“Hold my hands,” he said to the boy and girl. “We’re going to walk a little.

“How far?”

“A couple of blocks...” Harry replied grabbing hold on to their hands after they had hesitated.

“My feet hurt,” the girl sniffled.

“Shut it, Ash, just do what he says,” the boy growled. At once Ashley did what she was told, and sniffled in silence.

Harry looked at the little girl as they began walking. Her face hung low under her wet cloak. She looked like a very sad rag doll. She was a lost soul in this world and broken into submission. As Harry turned his attention onto her brother, Harry caught a glimpse of a different spirit. The boy, although a lost soul like his sister and tortured just the same, was fuelled by anger, hate and grief. Harry was suddenly reminded of himself in fifth year when he had experienced so much of the same emotions.

Harry wondered what life would've been like for the two children if they had not been captured by his other self. Would Peter Pettigrew still be alive and working for one side? What would they be doing now? What would the children like: their hobbies and dreams? Did Tony want to be a famous Quidditch player or an Auror? Did Ashley want to be a princess or a Hogwarts Professor before all this happened? All that Harry wanted to do at their age, before he ever dreamed that he was a wizard was to get as far away from the Dursleys and get a job, any job to make sure he'd always have a roof over his head.

Now, as they rounded a corner into a very familiar street of manicured lawns and little houses that looked like dull boxes. He had never dreamt that he would make a journey back here. Harry thought insanely that these horrible Muggles would be much safer than living among wizards at the moment.

Harry stopped beside number two; both children stared at him, waiting for direction. He took a deep breath, it was around seven in the morning and Harry's Uncle Vernon Dursley would have left for work already.

Taking a very deep and long breathe Harry trudged forwards without stopping to reconsider his decision. He walked into the front garden up the few little steps that were guarded by two large hydrangea bushes, and then stood face to face with the white door with a large gold number four plaque. Harry strained his neck. The garden and the exterior of the house looked exactly the same as the Dursleys house in his own world.

"Is something wrong?" Tony asked.

Harry shook his head, "No... I'm just thinking that's all." He finally summed up all the courage he could master. He would rather face Voldemort now than to ask the Dursleys for safe refuge.

Harry knocked on the door three times. A dog barked from within the house, its sound becoming louder as he rushed towards the door. For a wild second Harry hoped to dear God it wasn't Aunt Marge's dearly

loved pit bull. Just as he was having a panic attack, a woman called for the dog to back off. At least she sounded like his Aunt Petunia.

The door opened, it took several moments before Petunia realised who stood on the front porch. She gasped just before she tried to slam the door shut. Harry regrettably, with a tonne of pain, had wedged his foot in-between the frame and the door, making Aunt Petunia yelp in fear and the dog growl.

“Get away from me you filthy boy!” she said with such fierce hate, Harry was slightly thrown aback. Yes, he thought, the Dursleys were exactly the same.

“Aunt Petunia, listen to me, we—“

He prised the door open and pushed himself into the hallway, both children following behind him. Petunia ran behind a cabinet and brandished a wooden coat hanger full of coats into Harry’s face. He backed off a little and Ashley squeaked, burying her head on Harry’s cloak.

“Get out of my house NOW! Or I’ll call those aero guard people who are hunting you!”

“They’re called Aurors-- Put the hanger down! I just want to talk; we’re not going to hurt anyone.”

Aunt Petunia was having none of it. She threw a figurine at Harry which missed his head by an inch. Ashley shrieked poking her wand at Petunia. The dog tried to bite Harry’s leg but managed to sink his teeth into his cloak.

“NO” Harry yelled. “No spells.” He warned the children, as he tried shaking off the dog. Aunt Petunia shrieked and bolted towards the kitchen, she slammed the kitchen door with a crash, its glass panes breaking.

“I’m calling the police!” Petunia screamed, now wielding a knife. “Get any closer and I’ll call them.”

Harry closed his eyes sighing with great frustration.

Tony looked at him, a smirk playing on his lips. Harry knew he was taking pleasure in Harry's failure to calm a Muggle woman.

"What do we do now?"

"Go wait in the living room," Harry snapped, pointing in the direction. They followed his order. Harry was going to have a nice chat with his Aunt Petunia.

At Spinners End, a different Harry was waking up. In fact he was used to abrupt wake up calls in Azkaban, so it was no surprise, when Snape barged into the room, slapping Harry to rouse from slumber.

"What the bleeding hell was that for?" he yelled, covering his face with both arms in a defensive mode.

"Your potions." Snape passed Harry a goblet filled with orange liquid. "It seems that you've stolen Bella's apprentices last night, boy."

Harry pulled his lips away from the goblet, narrowing his eyes. "Did I?" he said with surprise. What was his dimensional double up too? He thought.

Snape sighed. "Yes strange, considering that you've been in bed all night last night. The wards in this house would've triggered an alarm if you had somehow escaped—"

"Have I become your prisoner, Snape?"

Snape curled his lip. "This person looked like you--"

"The children are safe!"

A twinge of panic set in, he wasn't going to let anyone find out that there was an extra dimensional Harry in this world running amuck and gaining power. He was not going to let anyone get in his way of power and retaining top position in his master's circle. Stealing

apprentices was an offence. And it wasn't helping him with the fact he was now Below Bella. That would be mutiny.

"Does Bella know I'm beneath her now?"

"No. She still assumes you are higher than her in the circle," Snape replied. "That's why she reluctantly gave you the children. The news will reach her ears soon. Our master had rearranged the hierarchy only hours before this interesting development. In light, the Dark Lord will not kill you just yet because of your subordination. "

"Oh that's so nice of him."

Snape narrowed his eyes. "He still has use for you."

"Aha... trying to figure me out and my secrets while doing his bidding you mean?"

Snape ignored him. "He'll let you keep the children... if indeed it was really you who have perpetrated such mutiny."

Harry licked his lips. "Yes, I stole them."

"Where are they?"

"Safe."

"Care to explain how you did it? I would really like to know how you left this house without me kno--"

"Snape," Harry sighed, growing impatient. "That's for me to know and for you... to eventually find out. Now please, I have a headache and I'm really tired," he lied.

He drunk the orange liquid in one huge gulp, he was happy he managed to avoid dripping the liquid over his front, and humiliation he didn't feel like having first thing in the morning. He lay down and closed his eyes. Snape did not leave him in peace to sleep. Getting annoyed Harry looked at him.

“Do you mind?”

“Yes I do... ever since you knocked on my front door.”

Scowling, Harry watched the sallow bat like figure stand up from the armchair and walk silently towards the bedroom door. “Tomorrow, you’ll be able to start walking and eating solids again.

“Why are you taking care of me like this?” Harry said before he could stop himself.

“It is the Dark Lord’s order.”

“Does it have something to do with my mother?”

Snape turned around slowly, hands clenching and unclenching. “That’s for me to know and for you to never find out. Oh, do try to avoid wetting the bed again.”

As the door shut, drowning the room in darkness Harry bit into his pillow, avoiding the urge to yell. He hated Snape and this double of himself. “I’ll deal with you brother... as soon as I regain my strength.”

Please review. Thanks for reading.

Stay tuned for chapter 10. Action galore.

Chapter 10

A Rocky Start

It was late morning before Harry could get through to Aunt Petunia, who had, since his arrival been throwing objects and various sharp utensils at his head. Harry couldn't blame her for thinking he was some crazed murderer, but he wasn't. Her small pet dog continued to bark, at one stage biting Harry's shin, before he managed to shove the canine into the cupboard under the stairs.

"Aunt Petunia, please!" Harry pleaded as he ducked, avoiding a collision with a large figurine. It smashed in the hallway, and before Petunia could throw something else he managed to make his way into the kitchen, where his aunt now wielded a large knife in one hand and a fish casserole in the other.

"You're here to kill me and my family," she yelled, holding a casserole above her head. Her eyes were bulging, and her horsey face displayed so much fear that it made Harry recoil.

"No, really, I'm just here because those children you saw are hungry, scared and injured... and I just need some time to think about things." Harry breathed, eyeing the dish. "Look, you know Harry is dangerous-"

"Harry, HARRY? YOU ARE HARRY!" Petunia screamed, chucking the casserole.

Harry jumped out of the way, colliding side-on with the fridge. The dish left a large dent on the wall, but failed to even shatter. Frustrated and feeling more alone than ever, he watched Petunia grabbing a handful of utensils.

He ran a clammy hand through his hair. "I'm not-- it's a long story. If I was really here to kill you I would have already done it. Throwing plates and knives wouldn't be a match for any wizard."

Aunt Petunia scowled at the word.

Some things just never change, Harry thought. "Please... have some heart, their names are Ashley and Tony, you've seen their faces... they need help."

"The-they're freaks like you!" She spat, a meat cleaver dangling precariously above her head.

"Magical like me, yes," Harry replied calmly, "But they're still little children."

Aunt Petunia huffed, she seemed like she was about argue that fact, however, she bit her tongue.

Harry pursued, feeling like he was finally getting through to her. "Even, even though you hate me, you'd still patch me up when I'd hurt myself," Harry said, with slight bitterness. When he meant that she would patch him up as a small boy, like a grazed knee or a cut, Aunt Petunia would begrudgingly pull him up on the table, and after pounding disinfectant onto the wound would slap on a bandaid, before shooing him out to do his chores again. Meanwhile, if the same had happened to Dudley, she'd bundle him up in bandages and rush him off the emergency department. Harry can't pretend that he hadn't felt a sense of hurt and envy and the fact that his cousin had a mother who loved him.

Petunia narrowed her eyes. "I've never—"

"Still, it's a long story. But if it ever did happen, you would help me," Harry added quickly. He never felt like using the Imperious Curse on anyone until now. It would be so easy...

"I would never help a freak—"

"The point is," Harry interrupted, determined to break through the barriers she put up. "I'm asking you for your help... so what will it be? Will you give it to us?" God, Harry hoped she would.

After a moment that seemed like an eternity, which Petunia seemed to purse all the blood out of her lips, she banged the cleaver onto the kitchen counter and gave Harry a piercing look. "I don't trust you."

"You don't have too." Harry held his breath.

Another long pause, then, "Fine! I'll let you and those... freaks stay here until Vernon and Dudders return from Australia in two weeks time. I'll be watching you. If you dare try and kill me, I'll call the police, and I'll be armed."

"That's fair." Though Harry knew she'd be no match.

"I have a few conditions."

Harry grimaced. "Sure, whatever."

"I don't want the three of you to set foot outside the house. Don't make so much noise. And no freakiness what so ever, you understand?"

They weren't going to disobey her, not until Harry learned more about this world. "Yes. Thanks. Thank you so much."

Petunia gave him a side-ways glance. "I'm only doing this because you saved Dudley's life last year."

Harry raised an eyebrow. "I did?"

"Yes," she snapped, "from those Death people remember? A week before your brother died. They tormented us, the entire street, and Dudders was flung about and then one of them propelled him 100 feet into the air and dropped him. That's when you appeared and saved him from hitting the ground. It was horrible." There were tears falling from her face now. "My poor Dudders... he hasn't been the same since that day."

Harry was very confused. Why save Dudley's life one day, and then kill his brother the next? It made no sense whatsoever. Something just wasn't right. But he didn't have time to ponder about it.

"I never believed you did it anyway. But your world is not normal."

Harry had to sit down he was feeling a little light-headed. He wasn't sure if it was hunger or shock. Aunt Petunia eyed him suspiciously as she then she opened a cabinet and produced a large first aid kit which she dumped onto the table. "Here, I'll give you shelter and food, but don't expect me to mend their wounds."

"Ok," Harry said. He wasn't going to push Petunia's hospitality any more than she wanted too.

"The three of you can use the spare bedroom upstairs." Harry nodded, as she explained where the room was and the bathroom and so on. He knew where everything was, he just didn't feel like talking as his mind drifted off, trying to decipher a million questions and reeling over stories he's heard so far.

...Harry leaves Hogwarts six weeks before the Chamber of Secrets is opened, and until then had been a good boy, then just turns evil, Death Eater and murderer in the space of a few weeks. Meanwhile, he saves a Muggle, whom Death Eaters despise. What's going on? He thought.

Harry started, when Petunia snapped her fingers, exasperated by his lack of attention. "Have you been listening to a word I've said?"

Before Harry could reply, there was a tentative knock on the kitchen door. "Ha-Harry?" Squeaked Ashley. "Is everything ok?"

He walked over to her, while Petunia stepped as far away as possible from the child. Ashley could sense the distaste and fear from the woman and bowed her head. "I don't like her," she whispered.

Harry smiled lightly, whispering, "Me neither, but she's our only hope at the moment. She said we can stay, as long as we're quiet and cause no trouble." He looked up and found Tony sitting on the stairs, watching him in the dark. "Come on," said Harry. He picked up the first aid kit and ushered Ashley towards the stairs to where her brother was. The dog that was still in the cupboard started growling again. Harry kicked the door in response. Climbing the stairs felt like an arduous chore, especially for the children who were so exhausted. Halfway up, Petunia stepped into the hallway staring up.

“Harry?”

“Yes?” What now? He thought.

She opened her mouth, though nothing came out. Eventually she turned away and said, “Never mind.”

After showing the bedroom Harry opened the bathroom door. It finally seemed like the light at the end of a tunnel. Tony gingerly sat on the bathtub, while Ashley looked around the ghastly kitsch pink tiles and shower curtains.

“She’s a weird woman,” Tony said, eyeing Harry.

“She’s just frightened of us.”

Ashley turned on the tap in the sink and started drinking water. Harry couldn’t help but feel disgust at the state of the children, he felt as though he was seeing them for the very first time. They were filthy. Their wounds and scars caked under a layer of dirt and blood. They were so starved, their eyes showing no hint of joy or happiness, just darkness and fear.

Harry took a hand towel from the rack and soaked it in warm running water. He sat Ashley down and carefully removed the muck from her face. He tried to do the same for Tony, though the boy struggled for a while and eventually Harry gave up. The children waited expectantly for what he would do next.

“I’ll get some clothes while you two get washed.” They nodded. As Harry left the bathroom the children began to undress with uncertainty in their faces.

It took awhile before Harry could find some suitable clothes for them to wear, even with Aunt Petunia’s help. Boxes of Dudley’s old shoes and clothes from when he was a boy were in a cupboard. Two of Dudley’s enormous shirts would be enough for the children’s nightwear. Harry made up the bed for them, while he was content with sleeping on the floor.

He was waiting outside of the bathroom when the door creaked open. "Harry," Tony said. "We're done."

Harry saw steam rushing upwards from the boy's cleaned body. Tony hugged the fluffy white towel as it cocooned him in safety and warmth. He looked so fragile without the grime. He looked much better, however, at the same time; the scars were vivid, shocking Harry. The boy seemed very self conscience about it. "Don't look at me like that," he stated, disappearing into the bathroom again.

"Ok." Harry stepped in, feeling shame. He was engulfed in a cloud of steam and heat. The children clung to each other in their towels. He placed the pile of clothes on the stool and unlocked the first aid kit before starting to treat their many wounds.

The children scrunched their faces as Harry cleaned cuts and deep grazes, dabbed betadine and ointment and lastly dressed them in bandaids and bandages. "Any broken bones?" Harry asked.

Tony shook his head, speaking for his sister as well. "Is there magic you could use? We haven't had any training in it."

"No, I'm afraid that I didn't learn how to heal, I just know the Muggle way of things."

"Oh..." The boy was disappointed. "I thought you could've helped me with these scars." He touched his face lightly, wincing.

Harry kept quiet. He didn't know what to say. He wished he could help, but he wasn't sure if there was anything to help the boy. "Tony, are you blind in your right eye?" the boy nodded. Harry searched his face. "What happened to you?"

"They burnt him," Ashley spoke this time. "They burnt him because he didn't bow to mistress Bellatrix." The girl started to cry. "It was horrible."

"Shut up, Ashley." The boy growled, pulling up the harsh defences that Harry had noticed when he first met them. "Just stop crying, you

big cry baby. That's all you're ever good at: crying and doing what everyone says!"

"Hey, you shouldn't talk to her like that! She cares about you, Tony."

"I want to get dressed now." Tony yanked a shirt and pulled it on, before slipping out into the spare bedroom.

Ashley sniffled. Staring at the doorway, hoping her brother would enter again, though he didn't. "He's always mean to me," she murmured, rubbing her red, puffy eyes.

"Maybe he worries about you too much that he becomes sad when you hurt, that's why he acts that way." She shrugged at his answer. "I think you're done," Harry added, picking up the discarding packaging and swabs and chucking them into the bin.

Ashley dressed herself and looked into the mirror as she stood on her tip toes. "Harry, will my hair grow back?" She gingerly touched the bruises and scabs on her head. Her bristled brown hair was just beginning to peek out of her scalp.

"I think so." he replied. "Listen, you should get into bed. I'll bring up some lunch for you and your brother to eat a little later, all right?"

"Thanks Harry, thanks for everything. I thought you were bad, but I like you now."

Harry smiled, feeling like he was gaining her trust a little more. "What does Tony think?"

Ashley frowned. "He still thinks you're up to no good." With her last words she left, leaving Harry alone in the bathroom.

It felt like a few minutes before Harry stopped staring at himself in the mirror and undressed, stepping into the shower and just feeling the glorious warmth and relaxation water could bring upon his body. He missed a good soaking wash. He watched the black water wash off -- snaking off his limbs, and then spiralling into the drain. The scent of soap clung to nostrils like an old memory. He was so relaxed that he

didn't notice the tears rolling down his cheeks or when he slid down the tiled wall, sobbing. He thought of Ron and Hermione... and Ginny, dear Ginny. He thought of the Weasleys, Remus and Tonks and everyone else. He wondered what they were doing and if they were doing their best to bring him back... wondered how far Voldemort had gotten... the Horcruxes... how many had died. He wanted to, so desperately, find his way back home.

He had one world's burdens upon his shoulders. He knew he didn't have the strength to take on another's as well.

It was midnight at Godric's Hallow when a piercing scream echoed throughout the house. Lily bolted out of bed, her hair clinging to her face with sweat. But James had gotten to their bedroom door first, and sprinted across the hallway. Lily's heart was pounding and she feared for the worst. "Harry, oh God, don't let him take another child away from me," she thought out loud.

Instead, as James opened Christopher's room, wand in hand, there was no Harry, or Death Eater or Voldemort around. It was Jessica who stood at the foot of their son's bed and Chris was yelling at the top of his lungs.

Michael pushed past James in his bid to protect his brother from unknown forces, but turning from his brother to his sister, the tension in his shoulders released and he rolled his eyes. "Oh well, gee, thanks for waking me up Chris."

"Shut up!" Chris shouted, pointing at Jessica, "she was muttering a spell at me!"

James raised an eyebrow as he lifted the girl into his arms, pulling her dark hair from her eyes. "Is that true, Jess, were you muttering an incantation?"

Lily sat on Chris's bed, and held the shaking boy in her arms. Her eyes though, focused on her daughter.

"I thought she was a Death Eater!" His eyes were wide like saucers, not a trace of sleep still in them.

Jessica shook her head, her hair flying about. "I'm a good girl. I'm a good girl, daddy..." She burst into tears, and hid her face in the crook of his shoulder. "I-I was just trying to protect him."

"Protect him from what, darling. That's mummy and daddy's job. Your job is to not worry what grown ups are doing," Lily spoke.

James sighed, completely confused as Lily could see. How very strange she thought.

"This is all Harry's fault," Michael spat as he left the room. He slammed his bedroom door shut.

Lily couldn't, however, shake the feeling that something was very wrong. She couldn't shake the feeling that something was about to happen. She squeezed her son's shoulder.

Half an hour, four cups of strong teas and two firewhiskey's later; Lily tucked in her daughter into bed, and kissed her forehead. She was about to leave when she heard her little girl's soft voice. "Mummy."

"Yes, dear?"

"If I was bad, would you put me in Azkaban?"

"Oh, no, sweetheart! I wouldn't do that to you. I'd protect you from all of that."

"But you didn't protect Harry."

Lily felt her heart squeeze. How could she answer that question? But in a way, Jessica had been right, why didn't she protect Harry? She was his mother; she should've noticed something amiss in her son before he killed. She should've noticed how secretive he had gotten; how his sparkling, happy green eyes, became masked to the point Lily could not see the son she knew as a little boy behind them. Why didn't she notice how quiet, so desolate Harry had become, that not

even a joke would stir humour in him? Lily wanted to punish herself for never noticing the subtle changes for what they were. She was too busy with the Order, protecting everyone else, that in the end, she failed to protect her own children.

Lily was so preoccupied with her thoughts that she could not remember ever getting back into bed, but as she lay there, she could tell that James was nowhere near sleep yet.

“James?”

“Hmmm?”

The darkness between them felt thick all of a sudden.

“I’m worried about Jessica.” When James didn’t reply, Lily continued. “We should take her to St Mungo’s—”

“Right, Lily... if you even set foot into St Mungo's, Voldemort will kill you.”

“Honestly Ja--”

“What makes you so special? You rescued those poor children from Malfoy Manor a month ago. He hasn’t forgotten that. And might I add, without approval by the Order in the first place.”

Lily knew James had never forgotten the incident where she had found out that a group of Muggle-born children were held captive, after receiving fake Hogwarts Letters. They were told to meet at a certain place only to be abducted, conditioned, and made into slaves for pure-blood families. Meanwhile, their Muggle families had no idea what had happened to them and the police were stumped for clues. Dumbledore refused to raid the Malfoys while Lily protested several times. In the end, she banded a few of Order members, all mothers, and rescued the children themselves. Dumbledore had been angry, but at the same time was pleased that they were safe. The children stayed within several Order Members’ Houses, being treated for their injuries, before returning to their families, with a promise that they

would be taught magic in their homes, after necessary protection was added.

“I don’t think that will happen.”

“HA! Remember what happened to Gladys Macken?” James said, shifting his weight to face his wife in the dark. “Mother to that poor boy we found dead in Cumbria? Do you know what Greyback did to him just because the boy escaped from Voldemort’s so called indoctrination? His Mother went into hysterics when she found out... Greyback snuffed her in the end too and dropped whatever was left of her corpse in front of the Ministry with a warning letter nailed to her forehead to all mothers out there.”

“I don’t want to hear anymore, James--” Lily closed her eyes.

“I just want to know, why you think --- I’ve lost my sons already, I don’t want to lose you too.”

“Severus won’t let that happen to me.”

James roared in laughter. “What? Snape protecting you from the Ministry? Oh my God, Lily.”

“What? Just because Severus hates your guts for all the abuse you put him through, doesn’t mean he would betray me—“

James flung his sheets over and started pacing the bedroom. “Right, let me get this straight, Lily...” Even though it was dark, Lily could see him running his hands through his hair. “I know you had a strange relationship with Snivelus as a kid, but are you still in contact with him?”

Lily did not answer.

“Jesus, Lily, are you fucking mad?” James hissed. He was trying not to wake up his three children.

“James—“

“Are you having an affair with him?”

“NO!” Lily shouted, undignified. “How dare you even consider that!”

“Why then?”

“Because, James, he’s my only link to Harry!” There, she finally said it. Their correspondences, which had started as soon as Harry had been imprisoned, were always short and sharp, but it still felt like a dirty secret. “I-I just want to be kept updated with what Harry is up to-“

“I don’t want to talk about him,” James yelled, “He’s not my son anymore. And cut any link with that snake, Lily! I never want you talking to Snape ever again!”

James marched out of their bedroom, and Lily feeling hot tears well in her eyes. She didn’t have the energy to chase after him.

“Bloody hell!” She heard Michael yell from across the corridor. “Can anyone get some sleep tonight?”

Stay tuned to Chapter 11 and please, don't forget to review. :)

